"More may have been required of them than they were able to perform . . ."

Seminary Ridge on July 3

Matthew Atkinson

Like many boys, I used to play "war" in the fields surrounding my parent's house. There were tall weeds in the back part of the pasture which served as Yankees for the butt of my play musket. I must have cleared that whole field out. Giving inspiration to my daydreams was a book by George Swift Trow titled *Meet Robert E. Lee*. Of course, Gettysburg loomed large in its pages. According to the narrative, the Confederates doffed their hats to Lee because they could not cheer. I must have reenacted that scene a thousand times before marching across the pasture. Now at Gettysburg, I make a living at a hobby where I still get to play "war," and I count myself among the luckiest of people. This paper is a culmination of all those "war" days.

The paper's first portion shows the *evolution* of Lee's July 3 plan of attack, then compares the final plan to its actual execution. Therefore, the reader will follow the Confederates only to the vicinity of the Emmitsburg road. The rest of the story has been told countless times and would require a book to retell again. The aftermath of the charge, particularly the psychological effect of the attack on Pickett's division, is also taken up in these pages. General Robert E. Lee also comes to the fore in a detailed account of the post-attack rally. Finally, the story of Mississippian Jeremiah Gage closes out the narrative. So, let us begin our journey.

The streaks of dawn showed over the horizon on July 3 as Gen. Robert E. Lee rode Traveller toward James Longstreet's headquarters. The previous day had almost brought Confederate victory, but timing and the "imperfect halting way in which his corps commanders" had fought had cost the army dearly. July 3 offered another chance for the Army of Northern Virginia to achieve a "proper concert of action." Perhaps this day would bring the victory that had eluded the army so far.[1]

The actual plan for Pickett's Charge has possibly caused more debate than any other single aspect of the Battle of Gettysburg. In the post-war years, veterans wrote prolifically on the

subject. The problem for battlefield students and scholars is that many times these post-war accounts are inconsistent due, in large part, to the fact that the assault plan changed several times throughout the morning of July 3. Veterans further compounded the problem by writing on what actually happened instead of what was supposed to happen. Also, many details of the plan, despite the volumes of letters and memoirs written about it, remain unclear. Hence, even today, the actual plan is very difficult to decipher and therefore makes the task of understanding the day's events all the more daunting.

The Attack Plan Evolves

"The general plan was unchanged," wrote Lee in his report. This meant simply that the Confederate army would renew its offensive plan of July 2 by attacking both flanks of the Union lines simultaneously. "Longstreet, re-enforced by [General George S.] Pickett's three brigades … was directed to attack the next morning …" In other words, the divisions of major generals John Bell Hood and Lafayette McLaws, reinforced by Pickett's division, would attack the Union left again on July 3. Lee believed that the ground gained in the Peach Orchard area could serve as an artillery platform to support the assault. The attack would ignore the Round Tops and strike the southern end of Cemetery Ridge. In conjunction with Longstreet's attack, Gen. Richard S. Ewell's corps prepared to renew the fight in the Culp's Hill area. Lee hoped that the combined pressure on the Union flanks might lead to a greater tactical opportunity, if not a breakthrough of the enemy line.[2]

Lee and Longstreet had not met the previous night, which may have led to some confusion about the plan of attack. However, there is no doubt that an attack order was issued. During the evening of July 2, battalion artillery commander Col. Edward Porter Alexander visited Longstreet's headquarters and recalled "… I was told that we would renew the assault early in the morning. That Pickett's Division would arrive and would assault the enemy's line. My impression is the exact point for it was not designated, but I was told it would be to our left of the Peach Orchard." In another recollection, Alexander remembered his orders "in brief, that our present position was to be held and the attack renewed as soon as Pickett arrived, and he was expected early." Campbell Brown, an aide on General Ewell's staff, shared Alexander's recollections. "On the night of the Second," he wrote, "we received word that the attack would be renewed at daylight of the third, by Longstreet. We were to cooperate, as before, by opening with artillery & engaging the attention of the enemy as far as possible."[3]

The general lay of the land surrounding the Peach Orchard and along the Emmitsburg road could serve very effectively to launch an offensive movement. Because of its elevation and size the Peach Orchard and the Emmitsburg Road ridge afforded an ideal artillery platform, and the reverse slope provided covered ground where multiple brigades could assemble and form for an attack. Many Confederate units were already in an advanced position anyway and, with a slight realignment, could easily move forward at dawn. Since the attack was never executed, there is no way to tell how the alignment would have looked. However, a few Confederate officers left a glimpse of the general plan.

When Lee arrived at Longstreet's headquarters at early dawn, cannon fire from the Culp's Hill area announced that fighting had resumed in that quarter. Longstreet recalled he began the conversation by saying,

> General, I have had my scouts out all night and I find that you still have an excellent opportunity to move around to the right of Meade's army, and maneuver him into attacking us. He replied pointing his fist at Cemetery Hill: "The enemy is there, and I am going to strike him." I felt then that it was my duty to express my convictions; and said: "General, I have been a soldier all my life. I have been with soldiers engaged in fights by couple, by squads,

> companies, regiments, divisions and armies, and should know, as well as any one, what soldiers can do. It is my opinion that no fifteen thousand men ever arrayed for battle can take that position," pointing to Cemetery Hill. General Lee, in reply to this, ordered me to prepare Pickett's division for the attack. I should have not so urgent had I not foreseen the hopelessness of the proposed assault. I felt that I must say a word against the sacrifice of my men; and then I felt that my record was such that General Lee would or could not misconstrue my motives. I said no more, but turned away. The most of the morning was consumed in waiting for Pickett's men, and getting into position.[4]

Longstreet later wrote in his autobiography, *Manassas to Appomattox,* that "the general seemed a little impatient at my remarks, so I said nothing more."[5]

Longstreet's lack of preparation for renewing the assault Lee had planned must have irritated the tired army commander, and now his senior corps commander was proposing a movement completely contrary to his wishes. Regardless, he had to deal with the present situation: Ewell's assault must halt in order for a coordinated attack to be executed.[6]

A courier carrying orders to disengage rode swiftly to Ewell, but the message arrived too late. Ewell's corps had already assumed the offensive rendering Lee's grand plan for a coordinated attack impossible and Longstreet's men were not in position to renew the offensive. In fact, Pickett's division had not arrived yet or for that matter even roused from its campgrounds in the rear. In the post-war years, Longstreet glossed over Pickett's not being in place. In his memoirs he went so far as to insinuate that he had received no orders for renewing the offensive and that Lee should have ordered Pickett to the front.[7] But even Longstreet's staunchest defender, William G. Piston, admits that Longstreet had erred:

> Incredibly, Longstreet failed during the night to order the division into a position where it would be ready at dawn to support either an attack on Cemetery Ridge, a movement around Little Round Top to attack the Federal rear, or, for that matter, a strategic maneuver to force Meade to do the costly attacking. This oversight remains inexplicable. … Had Pickett been available for immediate support, from any direction, Lee could have ordered McLaws and Hood to attack from their present positions in order to give Ewell's assault at least a chance of success.[8]

In one of the most charitable statements of any battle report, Lee stated, "General Longstreet's dispositions were not completed as was expected, but before notice could be sent to General Ewell … [he] had already become engaged and it was too late to recall him."[9]

Despite the miscarriage of the original attack design, Lee still held hope that Longstreet's 1st Corps could renew the offensive. Lee and Longstreet, with their respective staffs, rode out to the Peach Orchard area to reconnoiter the Union position. The group included aides Charles Venable, Walter Taylor, A. L. Long, and eventually A. P. Hill and Henry Heth. What transpired at the conference became a matter of debate in the post-war years.[10]

Colonel Long states that during the conference the plan of attack was discussed. He distinctly recalled:

> It was decided that General Pickett should lead the assaulting column, to be supported by the divisions of McLaws and Hood and such other force as A. P. Hill could spare from his command. The only objection offered was by General Longstreet, who remarked that the guns on Round Top might be brought to bear on his right. This objection was answered by Colonel Long, who said that the guns on Round Top could be suppressed by our batteries. This point being

> settled, the attack was ordered, and General Longstreet was directed to carry it out.[11]

Colonel Taylor remembered the same attack plan, that "Longstreet should endeavor to force the enemy's lines in his front. That front was held by the divisions of Hood and McLaws. To strengthen him for the undertaking, it was decided to reinforce him by such troops as could be drawn from the center." Taylor further states that "because of the apprehensions of General Longstreet that his corps was not strong enough for the movement, that General Hill was called upon to reinforce him." As additional proof, Taylor points to Gen. A. P. Hill's report that his troops were "to report to Lieutenant-General Longstreet *as a support to his corps,* in the assault on the enemy's lines." As far as Lee's understanding of the role of Hood's and McLaws's divisions, Col. Charles Venable claimed he "called his attention to it long afterward, when there was discussion about it. He said, 'I know it! I know!'"[12]

Capt. Louis G. Young, aide to division commander James J. Pettigrew, who had assumed command of Heth's division after the latter's wounding on July 1, further confirms that the original order to Hill was to support Longstreet. "When Pettigrew … reported to Longstreet he was instructed to form in rear of Pickett as a support to the division." Young wrote, "but before the order could be executed it was countermanded, and directions given to place the division … to the left of Pickett's division, with which it would advance in line."[13]

Capt. Louis G. Young. Clark, *North Carolina Regiments*

To summarize, the plan of assault called for Longstreet's 1st Corps – Hood's, McLaws's, and Pickett's divisions – to attack the southern end of Cemetery Ridge. A. P. Hill's infantry, probably Pettigrew's division, was to serve as support for Longstreet's left. The exact role of Pickett's division in this plan is not known; perhaps the Virginians were to support McLaws's and Hood's divisions, or possibly they were to bridge the gap between McLaws's left flank and Pettigrew's right –essentially the same placement as the final assault. Therefore, the questions remains: If this many Confederate officers had the same recollection regarding the elements of the plan, why did it not take place?

In 1877, Walter Taylor posed this very question to Longstreet. Taylor's understanding was that "an assault should be made on your front by your corps, reinforced by Heth's division and two brigades of [Major General William Dorsey] Pender's. My recollection is distinct in that *all* of your divisions were to take part in the assault, and I never did understand why Hood and McLaws were never ordered forward. Colonel Venable agrees with me entirely in this particular."[14] Longstreet responded curtly:

> In reply to your inquiry for a statement in regard to the supposed orders of General Lee in reference to the battle of the third day, I have only to say that General Lee gave no orders for placing the divisions of McLaws and Hood in the column of attack on that day. I cannot, therefore, have any explanation to make at this time why these divisions were not in that column.[15]

In the fall of that year the *Philadelphia Weekly Press* published Longstreet's article "Lee in Pennsylvania" in which he labeled any idea that he was to include McLaws and Hood in the attack as "absurd" and added:

> He [Lee] could not have thought of giving any such order. Hood and McLaws were confronted by a largely superior force of the enemy on the right of Pickett's attack. To have them moved to Pickett's support would have disengaged treble their number of Federals, who would have swooped down from their rocky fastnesses against the flank of our attacking column, and swept our army from the field.[16]

However, Taylor and Long make a strong case that the original attack plan did call for Hood's and McLaws's divisions to participate in the assault. But, of course, these two divisions did not participate in the July 3 attack. The evidence suggests that this original plan was only one of the evolutions before a final assault plan was settled upon. The only logical conclusion is that Longstreet and Lee held subsequent discussions regarding the planning for the attack and that Taylor, Long, and Venable were not present at these.

On that note, Gart Johnson of Company C, 18th Mississippi Infantry, held a position on the picket line near an apple orchard on the morning of July 3. He recalled "Gens. Lee and Longstreet – on foot, no aids, orderlies or couriers, fifteen or twenty steps apart, field glasses in hand – came walking past us, stopping now and then to take observations." At the time, the two picket lines were close together. A Mississippian worried for the commanding general's safety and said, 'Gen. Lee, you are running a very great risk. At that moment the searching Minnie was cutting close to him, showing that he was the mark aimed at. He went on with his observations as calm and serene as if he was viewing a landscape." Johnson continues, "a few minutes afterwards we heard him say to Longstreet, in substance, 'Mass your artillery behind that hill,' pointing to a ridge just in our rear, 'and at the same signal bring your guns to the top of the ridge and turn them loose.'" Hearing this was enough for Johnson and his fellow Mississippians. "Well spades or no spades, we went into the ground quicker than you would think," he recounted. "We were like the fellow after the ground hog, *it had to be done.* Bayonets, pieces of board, any thing to get out of sight. Two or three to a hole, and we went in like gophers."[17]

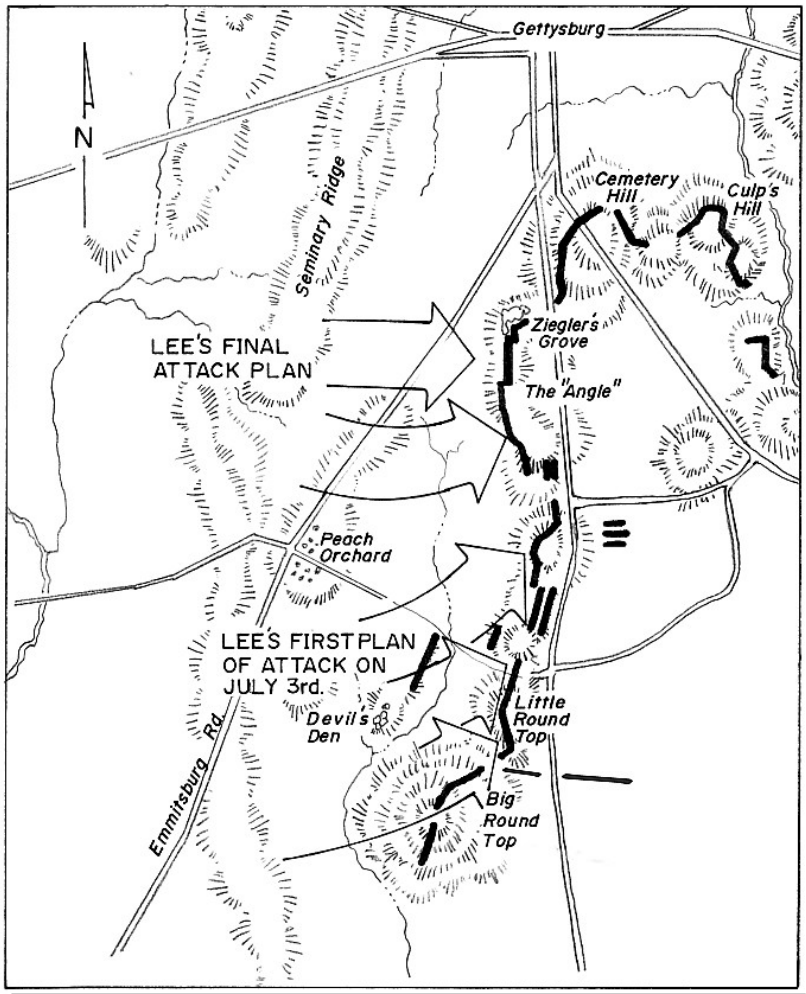
Despite the Mississippian's colorful account, the exact conversation between Lee and Longstreet is not recorded. However, Lee's report encapsulates the thought process that led to second plan:

> General Longstreet was delayed by a force occupying the high, rocky hills on the enemy's extreme left, from which his troops could be attacked in reverse as they advanced. His operations had been embarrassed the day previous by the same cause, and he now deemed it necessary to defend his flank and rear with the divisions of Hood and McLaws. He was, therefore, re-enforced by Heth's division and two brigades from Pender's, to the command of which Major-General [Isaac R.] Trimble was assigned. General Hill was directed to hold his line with the rest of his command, afford General Longstreet further assistance if required, and avail himself of any success that might be gained.[18]

E. P. Alexander supported Longstreet's contention that Hood's and McLaws's men were not part of the now modified assault plan. Alexander was a shrewd observer of events and pointed out,

> The preparations for this charge were made deliberately, & under the observation of Gen. Lee, & of all his staff. From sunrise to 1:30 P.M. was nine hours, all devoted to this business, & within a few hundred acres of land. It seems to me

impossible to believe that Gen. Lee did not know quite accurately the location of every brigade he had upon that battlefield, hours before the cannonade opened. Certainly he & his staff officers also were all about in my vicinity, during the morning, & if there was one thing they might be supposed to take an interest in, it would be in seeing that the troops which were to support the charge were in position to do it. Why else should they have been around there & what else had they of more importance to look after during all that time?[19]



Lee's original intent for Longstreet's attack on July 3 and the final plan. Map by John Heiser.

From the available evidence it appears that all the troops selected to participate in the new plan of attack did in fact take part in the assault. But if McLaws and Hood were not included as part of the assault column, what role were they assigned to plan in the grand assault. The evidence is not clear. Whether the two divisions were ordered to stand ready to exploit any breakthrough or to simply hold in place is remembered differently.

In the post-war years, McLaws, related that not only was his division not intended to be part of the assault column but that he was unaware of the plans of the attack and had no orders otherwise.

> I was not notified that it was in contemplation even to make any further attack by either Hoods' or my division, nor was I informed that it was the intention to assault the enemy's centre with Pickett's division, with the assistance of troops

> from other corps. I was not told to be ready to assist, should the assault be successful, nor instructed what to do should the assault be successful, nor instructed what to do should the assault fail and the enemy advance.[20]

McLaws added that a half-mile separated his left from Pickett's right and "… therefore do not believe that we could have effected anything, and if we had been repulsed as Pickett was … and the enemy had then advanced their whole line, the consequences might have been more serious than they proved to be." This brought McLaws to only one conclusion: "I therefore do not think that it was ever expected by General Lee that Hood's and my division should take part in the charge unless we had been moved round and enveloped the enemy's left."[21]

Gen. Evander Law, commanding Hood's division after General Hood's wounding on July 2, remembered his orders for July 3 completely differently:

> Early in the morning of the 3d two of my batteries, [Captain A. C.] Latham's and [Captain Hugh] Garden's, were sent to Colonel (afterward General) E. P. Alexander, who commanded our artillery in the center, to assist in the cannonade of the Federal position south of Cemetery Hill, prepatory to the assault of General Pickett's division at that point; and about 9 o'clock A. M. General Longstreet came over to my position on the right, and instructed me to be ready to renew the attack on our front. [22]

Unfortunately, until additional memoirs or letters surface, the role of McLaws and Hood in the final plan for July 3 will remain unclear.

Another interesting, though largely overlooked, aspect of Pickett's Charge is the time of the planned assault. Despite Pickett's division not being in position on the morning of the 3rd, the evidence, although scant, suggests that Lee wanted the assault to begin on the morning of July 3. At some point, Lee informed Ewell that Longstreet's attack would begin at 10 A.M.[23]

When Lee designated the ten o'clock hour for the attack to begin is not known. A logical assumption would be that the time was designated in the early-morning hours, and that Ewell was notified of this at the same time he was directed to delay his offensive because Longstreet was not prepared. If this is correct, Longstreet would have had four or five hours to make his preparations. It is improbable that Longstreet was not aware of this time and had very likely helped set the time for the attack.

The new attack plan necessitated the shifting of many units – especially the artillery. Confederate units began to deploy on Seminary Ridge around mid-morning. Col. E. P. Alexander states, "A clump of trees in the enemy's lines was pointed out to me as the proposed point of our attack, which I was incorrectly told was the cemetery of the town, and about 9 A. M. I began to post it for the cannonade." By 10 A.M., seventy-five guns from the 1st Corps artillery were posted for action. As far as the infantry, Maj. Charles Peyton, commanding the remnants of Richard B. Garnett's brigade after the charge, stated that Pickett's division arrived at Seminary Ridge at 9 A.M. also. The puzzling aspect is why the assault did not go forward at 10 A.M. per Lee's timetable? Pickett's men were on the field, the artillery was in position, and yet Longstreet gave no order to attack.[24]

That there was some delay also explains Pickett's movement into position in front of Seminary Ridge roughly four hours before the start of the cannonade, otherwise it seems unlikely they would have exposed the troops to the blazing heat of the open ground for so long before the attack. The cause of the delay and whether Longstreet gave his reasons for it to Lee is unknown; perhaps he simply hoped Lee might change his mind about the assault.

Regardless of the reason, the right wing did not attack at 10 A.M. If Ewell was alerted to the delay it came too late for at 10 A.M. he executed his orders and attacked. The brigades of George

Steuart, Junius Daniel, and James Walker assaulted the entrenched Union positions along the face and lower crest of Culp's Hill. It was a useless effusion of blood.[25]

The revised 10 A.M. assault plan also apparently removed any contemplation of using Hood's and McLaws's divisions, which eliminated up to 9,700 men from the attacking force. This reduced the total size of the assault by 42 percent from what Lee may have originally contemplated using. The front narrowed from approximately a mile to a half-mile, with the objective becoming a salient point on Cemetery Ridge where a small copse of trees stood in the center.[26]

In the end, Lee placed a total of eleven brigades at Longstreet's disposal for the final assault plan. Longstreet's 1st Corps supplied the three brigades of Pickett's division – Richard Garnett, James L. Kemper, and Lewis A. Armistead. Longstreet gained control of eight brigades from Hill's 3rd Corps also: four brigades from Heth's division, now commanded by James J. Pettigrew, Colonel Birkett Fry's (formerly Archer's), Colonel James K. Marshall's (formerly Pettigrew's), Brigadier General Joseph Davis's, and Colonel John Brockenbrough's; two brigades from Pender's division, now commanded by Isaac Trimble: Colonel James Lowrance's (formerly Scales's) and Brigadier General James Lane's; and two brigades from Major General Richard H. Anderson's division – Brigadier General Cadmus Wilcox's and Colonel David Lang's. These brigades constituted a force of approximately 13,500 men.[27]

What transpired as these brigades made assembled for the assault was *mass confusion.*

Pickett's Division

The deployment of Pickett's division went awry from the start. The three brigades arrived on Seminary Ridge at approximately 9 A.M. Walter Harrison, who served on Pickett's staff, recalled what transpired as the troops deployed:

> The left of Garnett's Brigade overlapped a little the right of Pettigrew's in the line of battle front, thus preventing Armistead's Brigade from coming up in the continuation of the first line. While forming this line, Gen. Armistead asked me to inquire of Gen. Pickett whether he wished him to push out, and form line in front of the right of Heth's Division, or to hold his position in rear for the present. Brave old Armistead was very tenacious of place to the front. Not seeing Gen. Pickett immediately and anxious to satisfy Gen. Armistead, I rode up to see Gen. Longstreet, whom I saw with Gen. Lee, on top of the ridge in front of us, making a close *reconnaissance* of the enemy's position, and addressed Gen. Armistead's question to him. The great "war-horse" of the army, or as he was more familiarly called, "Old Peter," seemed to be in anything but a pleasant humor at the prospect "over the hill;" for he snorted out, rather sharply, I thought: "Gen. Pickett will attend to that, sir." Then, as I was going off – thinking perhaps, in his usual kind-heartedness, that he had unnecessarily snubbed a poor sub. – he said: "Never mind, colonel, you can tell Gen. Armistead to remain where he is for the present, and he can make up his distance when the advance is made."[28]

The initial alignment called for a three-brigade front for Pickett's division. Armistead's brigade would form the left of the brigade line. The mystery lies in Longstreet's words that Armistead could "remain where he is for the present, and he can make up his distance when the advance is made." Does this statement imply that Armistead should attempt to move up on the left during the advance? Or was he to simply remain as support to the main line of Garnett and Kemper?

Longstreet's after action report clearly indicates he viewed Armistead as a support for Garnett and Kemper. However, there is evidence that there was intent to move Armistead up on the left

during the advance. Colonel Joseph Mayo, commanding the 3rd Virginia from Kemper's brigade, remembered Pickett cautioning him twice to "keep the proper interval with General Garnett; Armistead was expected to catch up and extend the line on the left." Capt. Robert Bright of Pickett's staff also stated Armistead "was ordered to go in on the left of Garnett …" To illustrate how much confusion actually existed that day, Maj. Walter Harrison, Pickett's chief of staff, had the impression that Armistead did actually move up on the left. "Gen. Pickett led his brigades straight at the enemy's front; Kemper and Garnett front, and Armistead, getting up into line at a run, on Garnett's left," Harrison recalled.[29]

A postwar view of Colonel Birkette Fry. Meade Collection, CWLM

Pickett's orders on the field also add to the evidence. Pickett changed the direction of the division from "guide right" to "guide left." The change came from the shift of the brigade of direction from Pickett's division to the brigade of Col. Birkett Fry which occupied the right of Pettigrew's divisional line. In 1878, Fry recalled that Lee, Longstreet, and Hill "rode up and dismounting seated themselves on the trunk of a fallen tree, some fifty or sixty yards from where I sat on my horse at the right of the division." Soon after the conference concluded, Pettigrew informed Fry that the command would assault the Union position. Fry recalled:

> At the same time he directed me to see General Pickett at once and have an understanding as to the dress in the advance. I rode to General Pickett whose command was formed on our right. He appeared in excellent spirits, and after a cordial greeting and a pleasant reference to our having been together in work of that sort at Chapultepec, he expressed great confidence in the ability of our troops to drive the enemy when they had been "demoralized by our artillery." General Garnett, who commanded his left brigade, having joined us, it was agreed that he would dress on my command. I immediately returned and informed Genl. Pettigrew of this agreement. It was then understood that my command should be considered the centre and that both divisions should align themselves by it.[30]

An unpublished field sketch of Pickett awaiting the orders to advance on July 3 by Col. Alexander R. Boteler, a staff officer. GNMP.

To bolster this claim, Isaac T. Miller of the 1st Tennessee, Fry's brigade, recalled the officers calling "Dress on Col. Fry!" during the attack.[31]

The decision to change the brigade of direction came so quickly that some top-ranking officers were not informed. Longstreet was one of them. In his after-action report, he wrote that General Pickett's line was "to be the guide and to attack the line of the enemy's defenses, and General Pettigrew … moving on the same line as General Pickett, was to assault the salient at the same moment." Capt. Louis Young of Pettigrew's staff had the same impression: "Pickett's was the directing division; when it moved, Heth's Division was to move and as soon as possible overtake Pickett and continue the advance in line with it on its left," he wrote.[32]

Regardless of when Garnett and Fry worked out who the new brigade of direction would be, the change was not promptly communicated to Kemper until the time of advance. Maj. Edmund Berkley gave the best account of the series of events on the field:

> When we first commenced the charge the order was "dress to the right on Kemper," but a mounted man galloped up to General Garnett and said the order [was] dress to the left on Pettigrew, then wheeled his horse and galloped back. Colonel [Eppa] Hunton's orderly, George Hummer, said, "Colonel Hunton, I don't think that order has been carried to General Kemper. Had I not better inform him of it?" and Colonel Hunton acquiescing, he carried it to General Kemper, who said he had not received it but would obey it. I think it highly probable that it was this change of dress that led onlookers to mistake it for a half wheel, which would have been a very difficult maneuver in a line upwards of a mile in length.[33]

Capt. Robert A. Bright, of Pickett's staff, arrived a short time afterward and reiterated the order. "When I reached General Kemper, he stood up, removing a handkerchief from under his hat, with which he had covered his face to keep the gravel knocked up by the fierce artillery fire from his eyes," Bright recalled. The gist of his orders to Kemper were "you and your staff and field officers to go in dismounted; dress on Garnett and take the red barn for your objective point." (The red barn was actually the white-washed Codori log barn.)[34]

If one visits the battlefield today and walks the ground of Pickett's division's initial set-up before the attack, several terrain features stand out. As stated, since Garnett would now guide on Fry's brigade Kemper had to suddenly shift his brigade line to the left, and his initial objective point became the Codori barn. In order for Kemper to execute this movement the brigade would have to execute a left face, not a wheel, and move toward Garnett's right flank. Capt. William Bentley, who emerged from the assault commanding the 24th Virginia, remembered "the first movement was by the left flank to the depth of a regiment and then by the front" and later "moved alternately by the front and by the left flank." The high ground along the Emmitsburg road somewhat sheltered the men as this initial maneuver was performed.[35]

Kemper had to move fast. The orders to move forward went first to Garnett and Armistead and then to Kemper. Kemper had the farthest to go toward the Codori barn, and as Garnett and Armistead made a left oblique the distance increased. After Kemper's brigade crossed the Emmitsburg road, the line performed another left face to close the final distance. The movement caused much crowding in the line.[36] Capt. Bright had this impression:

> During the charge I found Kemper and Garnett, apparently, drifting too much to the left, and I believe it was because the red barn was too much to Kemper's left. General Pickett would have altered the direction, but our left being exposed by the retreat of Pettigrew's command, our men and ten thousand more were needed to the left.[37]

Garnett's men did not have as far to march. However, the brigade did have to avoid the Codori farm and, at the same time, not drift too far left to overlap Fry's brigade. To compound the

problem, Garnett and Armistead had started forward before Fry, the brigade of direction. For Garnett, this must have tried his skills as a commander, because for a few moments there wasn't another body of men to align upon. Nevertheless, his brigade managed to execute a complex maneuver. Although Fry's men started behind, they made up the distance, and as the Tennessee and Alabama boys neared the Emmitsburg road, Fry saw Garnett riding forward. "I heard Garnett give a command to his men which, amid the rattle of musketry, I could not distinguish," Fry recalled. "Seeing my look or gesture of inquiry, he called out, "I am dressing on you!"[38]

Garnett suffered from a swollen leg, the result of a kick by a horse. According to one account, he had to "will himself" into the saddle. Of course, mounting a horse placed Garnett in a precarious position. Maj. Walter Harrison sheds some light on how, perhaps, the Gettysburg "water" might have helped Garnett prepare for the charge:

> There is, or was, on the crest of the slope, and about two hundred yards in front of our line of battle, a certain peach-orchard, which has been often mentioned in accounts of the battle of Gettysburg; and attached to that peach-orchard was a house, with a well of the coldest, hardest water that ever sprung out of limestone rock. I never shall forget that water. Whether it is now the celebrated "Gettysburg water," which is said to cure every ailment that human flesh and blood and bones and intestines cherish for the detriment of us poor sinners, I know not; but I *shall* know, if ever I taste the abominable bottled stuff. It was *so* hard, you could hardly drink it, by itself; and it would hardly amalgamate with Chambersburg whiskey. Perhaps if the whiskey had been of a *darker color*, we might have got up miscegenation. I was sitting in this peach-orchard, with Gen. Garnett and Gen. Wilcox, first trying a piece of cold mutton which General Wilcox had produced, then *trying* to drink the hard water; and then accomplishing without much difficulty a little pull at the Chambersburg whiskey, only to prevent the water from freezing my whole internal economy, and petrifying my heart of hearts, when this first signal-gun broke mysteriously upon the long tedium of the day. Having been previously informed of the signal, I told Gen. Garnett that we had better be getting back to our line, as the work was about to commence in earnest.[39]

Despite his amalgamation, Garnett handled his brigade admirably during the advance to align with Fry. However, Garnett's line did not entirely clear the Codori farm. The right regiment, the 8th Virginia, had to break ranks to clear the obstacle the buildings posed and reform on the other side. The wounding of their Colonel, Eppa Hunton , at this time, compounded the difficulty of the task, but Major Edmond Berkley assumed command and successfully executed the movement.[40]

It was Pickett's duty to supervise the movement of his three brigades and arrange for their support as necessary. Orderly Thomas R. Friend rode with Pickett for much of the time. Friend remembered that Pickett began the advance between the brigades of Garnett and Armistead. The general then rode behind the rear of Kemper's brigade toward the Peach Orchard, near where his artillery battalion was positioned. After a short time, Pickett rode again toward the rear of Kemper's advancing line. He then dismounted at some point along the Emmitsburg road to observe the advance of his men. The rest of Pickett's movements are cloudy, but he probably returned south on the Emmitsburg road closer to his artillery battalion and the supporting brigades of Wilcox and Lang whom he was authorized to call to his support if necessary.[41]

Much controversy has surrounded Pickett's performance on July 3. The evidence indicates he fulfilled his duty as a division commander. He gave the orders for the change of front of his brigades from "guide right" to "guide left," and sent several aides in an attempt to rally some of the breaking men of Pettigrew's division. He dispatched an aide to Longstreet requesting succor

for his men and cautioned Colonel Mayo to keep the proper interval with Garnett. Upon closing with the Federal line, he sent instructions to watch the flanks. And he sent a staff officer to his artillery battalion, commanded by Major James Dearing, requesting support for the right flank when it was threatened. But once his division crossed the Emmitsburg road, Pickett lost tactical control of his brigades. The din of battle, along with the smoke and confusion, made issuing orders or attempting maneuvers well nigh impossible. Nevertheless, he succeeded in executing the necessary maneuvers that delivered all three of his brigades to the objective point of the assault, which, given the resistance encountered, was not a simple achievement. [42]

". . . the proposed point of our attack"

What was the objective point of Lee's grand assault? Much confusion has resulted from Confederate commanders using the words "Cemetery Hill" and "Cemetery Ridge" interchangeably, especially in the post-war years. The two most prominent Confederates who referred to Cemetery Hill in their writings were Alexander and Longstreet. Apparently many Confederates mistakenly assumed that Cemetery Ridge was actually Cemetery Hill. Alexander did not realize the error until 1907. In his *Military Memoirs of a Confederate,* Alexander stated "a clump of trees in the enemy's line was pointed out to me as the proposed point of our attack, which I was incorrectly told was the cemetery of the town …"[43]

Pickett's staff officer, Walter Harrison, returned to the Gettysburg battlefield in 1894. Harrison explained to historian John Bachelder "what an important feature that copse of trees was at the time of battle, and how it had been a landmark towards which Longstreet's assault of July 3d had been directed." Harrison, as Pickett's AAIG (Acting Assistant and Inspector General) surely knew the objective of Pickett's division.[44]

Some scholars contend that the "Copse" was not a large enough landmark for the Confederates to align upon from Seminary Ridge. This is correct to a certain extent. Confederate artillery and high-ranking officers could see the Copse of Trees from Seminary Ridge and focused their attention on that area, but Pickett's men could not see the Copse from their starting point so, as stated above, the Codori barn served as an initial guide. After crossing the Emmitsburg road, the brigades, especially Kemper's, needed a new guide point, and the Copse of Trees served this purpose.

Furthermore, the alignment of the attack points to the Copse of Trees as the terrain feature guiding the attack. Fry, being the brigade of direction, only had to maintain a straight approach in order for the rest of the brigades from Pettigrew and Pickett to align on his flanks. The support line of the assault supplies more evidence. The three rear brigades – led by Armistead, Lowrance, and Lane – all initially started at the center of the assault column. The brigades were placed to give weight to the center of the assault column, to exploit any breakthrough of the first line of brigades. And what point did the second line initially head toward? The Copse of Trees.[45]

Finally, the placement of Confederate artillery and the eventual bombardment lends further support that the assault intended to strike near the Copse of Trees. Confederate artillery batteries show through their placement on July 3 that the point of attack was Cemetery Ridge. As stated earlier, Alexander wrote that "a clump of trees in the enemy's line was pointed out to me as the proposed point of attack which I was incorrectly told was the cemetery of the town …" Therefore, in earlier Alexander writings, what he refers to as "Cemetery Hill" is actually "Cemetery Ridge." By 10 A.M., Alexander had "seventy-five guns in what was virtually one battery, so disposed as to fire on Cemetery Hill and the batteries south of it, which would have a fire on our advancing infantry." The batteries "south of it" were Freeman McGilvery's artillery line south of the present-day Pennsylvania Memorial. In Hill's corps, an estimated eighty guns were parallel to the Union ridge.[46]

One need only look at where the Confederate bombardment inflicted its greatest damage. The heaviest losses among Union artillery were suffered by the 2nd Corps batteries of Arnold,

Cushing, Brown, and Rorty, all of which were positioned within one hundred yards of the Copse of Trees. Woodruff's battery, located in Ziegler's Grove, several hundred yards to the north of the copse did not sustain the casualties of the other batteries. Why? Because Confederates artillery did not target this area as heavily as the objective point of the impending assault: the open face of Cemetery Ridge.[47]

That attack culminated at the designated point.

Pettigrew and Trimble

One of the most enduring mysteries of the entire plan of July 3 resides in the selection of Heth's division. Lee arrived at the decision to include the division at the morning conference with Hill, Longstreet, and Heth. During the conversation, Hill or Heth probably mentioned that the division was available for duty, the thought being that one day of rest had recuperated the men. This selection stands out as one of Lee's poorest judgments at Gettysburg. As Col. Charles Venable later wrote, "They were terribly mistaken about Heth's division in this planning."[48]

On July 1, the division had suffered grievous losses assaulting the Union 1st Corps; many field officers were killed or wounded in the fighting, which lessened the effectiveness of the division as a whole. For example, in Davis's brigade only two field officers were present for duty in three of the regiments. Out of the original four brigade commanders – James Archer, Joe Davis, John Brockenbrough, and James Pettigrew – Archer had been taken prisoner, Davis and Brockenbrough were incompetent, and Pettigrew had assumed command of the division after Heth was wounded. Therefore, at the very top leadership, the division marched into battle with only two "experienced" brigade commanders of nominal value, two novice brigade commanders who had been elevated to command on July 3, and a division commander with no experience at division command in battle.

The alignment of Pettigrew's division bears a closer look also. The four brigades were aligned from right to left in the following order: Fry, Marshall, Davis, and Brockenbrough. The alignment seems to have derived from where the troops were in position on July 3. The only change came when the division shifted 350 yards north to accommodate Pickett's division when it arrived on the field.[49]

During the disposition of troops, Longstreet chose not to place any reserves behind the left flank. Instead, the reserves, Lowrance's and Lane's brigades, were placed in the right rear of Pettigrew's line. This decision left Brockenbrough, the weakest brigade of the division, to hold the left flank unsupported. In Longstreet's defense, he had no way of knowing the Virginians' condition. Nevertheless, one must ponder what Longstreet's designs, if any, were for the left flank.[50]

Maj. T. M. R. Talcott later claimed that Pettigrew had a different understanding of the support for his left flank than what actually took place:

> Major C. S. Venable told me whilst the army was at Hagerstown that but for the failure of Trimble to support Pettigrew, the assault would, in his opinion, have been successful. Pettigrew, he said, understood that Trimble's two brigades were to advance in echelon on his left, and when his left was threatened he sent an aide to Trimble urging him to push forward. Failing to receive the support he expected, in time, he had to change front under fire with Davis' brigade, which resulted in disaster and deprived Pettigrew of two brigades which should have been with him in the assault.[51]

During the morning, Brig. Gen. James Lane commanded the two brigades that formed the support line to Pettigrew. His brigades had originally been positioned further north on Seminary Ridge, at approximately the start of modern-day West Confederate Avenue, and the movement of his troops further south took time. When Lane arrived apparently no one informed him that his brigades were to advance *en echelon* to Pettigrew, and when Maj. Gen. Isaac Trimble assumed command of the division right before the assault, he was not informed either. But since Longstreet personally placed these two brigades in rear of the right half of Pettigrew's line, their position was certainly his design and indicate that he intended the weight of the assault to be near the center of the assault column.[52]

Brig. Gen. James J. Pettigrew (left) and Major General Isaac Trimble (right). Meade Collection, CWLM

Finally the appointed hour arrived for Pettigrew's and Trimble's men to advance. Pettigrew, having a flair for the dramatic, rode in front of Marshall's North Carolinians and uttered, "Now Colonel, for the honor of the good old North State. Forward." Fry and Marshall, the two right brigades, started quickly "in magnificent style." However, as noted earlier, although Pettigrew had a longer distance to march, Pickett started first – another oversight by the Confederate high command.[53]

Almost instantly the alignment went askew. Pettigrew's aide, Capt. Louis G. Young recalled what happened:

> Pettigrew had taken every precaution to insure concert of action in the division; but this was no easy matter, for the woods which concealed us from view of the enemy, and to some extent sheltered us from his shells, contained other troops seeking the same shelter, and it so happened that General Davis, who afterwards told me that he had been indignant with General Pettigrew for cautioning him so frequently to conform promptly to the movement of Pettigrew's Brigade on his right, mistook other troops for Pettigrew's and did not discover his mistake until the two right brigades had advanced the same distance. When we emerged from the wood into the plain, the absence of the two left brigades was discovered, and General Pettigrew instructed me to go for them with all speed, but I had scarcely turned to do so, when out came Davis from the woods with a rush, but not

> Brockenborough's [sic] Brigade, and I asked General Pettigrew if I should go for it. He replied, "No," that it might follow, and if it failed to do so it would not matter.[54]

Pettigrew's statement speaks volumes about the condition of Brockenbrough's brigade. Col. John Brockenbrough had served as brigade commander off and on during the war. The elevation of Heth to division command once again thrust Brockenbrough into temporary command of the brigade. He seemed to lack confidence in his own ability, and the men sensed this. The colonel reinforced his men's doubts by dividing his brigade into two halves before the attack. Brockenbrough took command of the right half while designating Col. Mayo the left. According to Col. William Christian, commander of the 55th Virginia on the brigade's left flank, "Col. Bro[c]kenbrough came to me and said he intended to divide the Brigade and said the 55th and 47th must move only at the orders of Col. Mayo of the 47th, and that I must consider myself temporarily under the command of Col. Mayo."[55]

A postwar view of Col. John M. Brockenbrough. Meade Collection, CWLM.

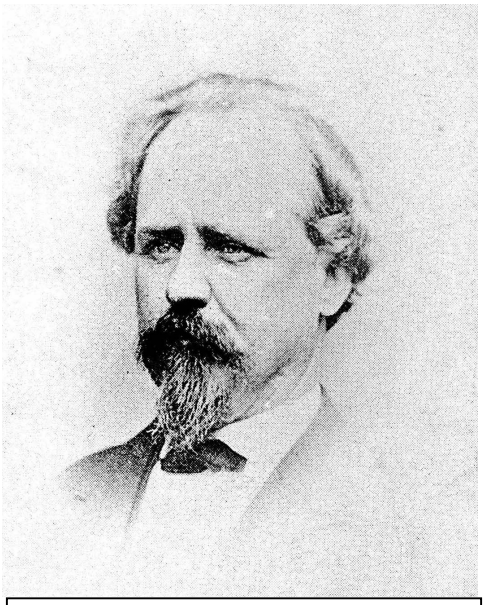
As Davis's brigade began to advance on the right, Brockenbrough stepped off with the 22nd Virginia Battalion and 40th Virginia Infantry. Back on the slope, Colonel Christian was in a quandary:

> Lieut. Col. John Lyle of the 47th & myself met for consultation, each inquiring, "Where is Col. Mayo." We remained there sometime as we had orders not to move till Col. Mayo said so. Finding that he did not come, and Col. Lyle having suggested that possibly he had been killed by the artillery fire, these two Regiments the 47th & 55th then moved forward. We were a long way behind and had to run to catch up with the rest of the Brigade. Even when on a run down that slope I could see that disaster had already befallen the right of our lines.[56]

The "disaster" Christian refers to was the disintegration of the right half of the brigade line, the 22nd Virginia Battalion in particular. Brockenbrough later reported to Heth that "he did not believe 20 men of the 22nd Va. Batt. went into the charge … ; that they shamefully ran away under the shelling prior to the charge." Intense Federal shelling from Cemetery Hill and Ziegler's Grove did not help matters either. The furthest point of the brigade's advance is still a point of contention today, but it did not reach the Emmitsburg road.[57]

Louis Young summed up Brockenbrough's brigade:

> This was a small brigade that had suffered from frequent change of commanders, and had been so badly handled that it was in a chronic state of demoralization, and was not to be relied upon; it was virtually of no value in a fight. Afterward it advanced to the protection of some rifle pits in front of Seminary Ridge, but it took no part in the charge.[58]



Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis. Meade Collection, CWLM.

Davis's brigade, on Brockenbrough's right, emerged from the woods before the Virginians, but after Marshall and Fry had commenced the advance. The delay in the brigade advance came from two factors. First, the lay of the land on Seminary Ridge kept the Mississippians from seeing the advance of Marshall's and Fry's men. Second, Davis mistook some other Confederate units (probably Carnot Posey's brigade) in the woods, who were not moving, for part of Pettigrew's line and therefore failed to go forward.[59]

Nevertheless, Davis's Mississippians and North Carolinians emerged and "with an impetuous rush soon caught up with the two brigades of Heth's division which preceded it …" Marshall's and Fry's brigades made an oblique when going forward, and consequently Davis's brigade had to also. From the beginning, Davis seemed to have difficulty managing his brigade. Young, who Pettigrew had assigned to watch the division's left recalled the brigade's travails, which were exasperated by a flanking fire from the 8th Ohio as they neared the Emmitsburg Road:[60]

> It [Davis] had suffered a great deal in the first day's fight; and in its rush from the wood on Seminary Ridge, it had arrived right oblique on Pettigrew's left, and in process of forcing its line back to the left, in order to get into position, there was for a little while a huddling of the men together, which exposed them to a greater loss than should have been, but the line was soon straightened out …. but this brigade was on the extreme left, not a support of any kind to brace it up, and exposed in flank, oblique and direct fire, what hope or confidence could be left to the few men, that if they held on they could succeed.[61]

Davis should have corrected the alignment, but the Confederate president's nephew did not have the command skills to do so. To their credit, Davis's men made it to the stone wall but, "reduced to a line of skirmishers, broke."[62]

Young immediately informed Pettigrew that Davis's men had broken. Pettigrew sent Young to Trimble with a request to hurry forward support to the left. However, Trimble's brigades were too far behind Pettigrew's front line to offer effective support. Young thought Trimble's delay came from the same circumstances that had detained Davis's brigade. "When I delivered my message, I knew that it was too late, and I recall my sad reflection, 'What a pity that these brave men should be sacrificed,'" Young recalled.[63]

In a July 30 letter, Confederate artillerist Captain Joseph Graham, of the Charlotte (NC) Artillery, recorded his front row seat of the attack on Seminary Ridge:

> Our men advanced steadily, but I fear with *too feeble determination,* some, up to the work, others, not so far, and so on, 'till some did not go more than 150 yds. Gen'l Pettigrew told me that when the front line gave way, (we advanced in two lines) he could see their Artillery limbering up their guns to retire from the works. Our second line was 1000 yards from the first, and of course not near enough to support it. This being the case, the first was completely routed, and broke through the second, spoiling the whole affair. I saw the whole charge, the view was open from my position, to the Enemy's works, on the Heights. The

> lines moved right through my Battery, and I feared then I could see a want of resolution in our men. And I heard many say, "that is worse than Malvern Hill," and "I don't hardly think that position can be carried," etc., etc., enough to make me apprehensive about the result.[64]

The destruction and carnage inflicted on Pettigrew's entire line was massive. Trimble related that when Pettigrew's men closed from 100 to 150 yards of the Emmitsburg road, "they seemed to sink into the earth under the tempest of fire poured into them."[65] Another Confederate watched the advance from Seminary Ridge:

> The first fire of the Federal artillery on the advancing line of Pettigrew and Trimble seemed to smite the column of attack as if it had been struck by some unseen power, some great physical body, causing the column to waver, reel, and for a moment halt.
>
> It was only for a moment; in a few seconds the smoke lifted, when deep gaps which extended through our lines to the rear of the column could be seen. The brave Confederates closing up those gaps, over the dead and bleeding bodies of their companions, moved forward unflinchingly to the Emmitsburg road. Solid shot now plowed through their ranks, grape and canister were doing their fatal work in the game of death, and sweeping away hundreds from our advancing lines. Undismayed by the blood and terror of the conflict, the assaulting column pushed on.[66]

Despite popular conceptions of the closeness of Trimble's support line, both Graham and Young contend that Trimble was not in supporting distance. Trimble's line may have closed the distance as the front line slowed and started to waver. But, according to Young, Pettigrew's lodgment, if any, occurred so briefly and the repulse so quickly that Trimble was too late. "It continued its useless advance alone," Young wrote, "only to return before it had gone as far as we had."[67]

Trimble's difficulty in guiding his two brigades was compounded when Fry and Marshall made an oblique to the right. With no friendly force in front, the left flank of Lane's brigade began to march faster than the rest of the line. This caused the brigade line to become skewed, and Lane's right flank fell somewhat behind Lowrance's left flank. Trimble "checked" the movement, and the advance continued.

Trimble confronted an additional problem when he ordered Lane's brigade to oblique left to fill in the gap left by Davis's repulse. The change from guide right to guide left came too quickly for some regimental commanders. On the extreme right, the 7th and a portion of the 37th North Carolina split from the rest of the brigade line and continued guiding right with Lowrance's brigade. The rest of Lane's men advanced to the general vicinity of the Emmitsburg road and, faced with heavy flank and frontal fire, could go no further. Lowrance's brigade, with a portion of Lane's, followed the path of Fry and Marshall into the fray. By this time, the remnants of Pettigrew's men were falling back, and the dead, wounded, and faint of heart lay strewn along the Emmitsburg road. The brigade lost its momentum, and only a few soldiers advanced further. Trimble's attack stalled, and the tide receded.[68]

James Pettigrew's command performance at the division level has not drawn as much scrutiny over the years as has George Pickett's. In some aspects the two generals are hard to compare. As already noted, Pettigrew faced large gaps in the brigade leadership structure while Pickett had all three veteran commanders on the field. Also, Pickett entered the fray with fresh troops while Pettigrew's men had suffered heavily. However, of the two assignments, Pettigrew had what

appeared to be the easier mission to execute: to march his division straight forward toward the Union position.

In reality, the situation on the ground was far different. The division did not simply have to march straight forward. The entire front had to oblique right, and sharply too, for the line had already started 400 yards behind Pickett. Furthermore, the contours of the ground hid the right half of the division from the left half, and Pettigrew failed to compensate by having a prearranged signal or staff officers ready to ride to each brigade to put it into motion. The result was a disjointed division front that never truly connected. Out of four brigades, he managed to successfully direct only two brigades to Cemetery Ridge. In Pettigrew's defense, perhaps not even Moses himself could have directed Davis and Brockenbrough in the assault. But Pettigrew was aware of the mediocre quality of these brigade commanders, as indicated by his comments to Young. He knew that his alignment was inadequate. He knew a portion of his troops were of questionable reliability. Yet he failed to compensate for any of these problems or alert anyone to them. Personally, Pettigrew was a brave soldier. He rode at least as far as the Emmitsburg road, where his horse fell and the bones of his left hand were shattered by an enemy projectile. His performance does not hinge on personal bravery but on his ability to bring the full combat power of his division against the enemy. In this respect his performance reflects his *inexperience* as a division commander, which even the most gallant conduct could not compensate for.[69]

"It is all my fault."

Robert E. Lee ordered, orchestrated, and watched the assault from Seminary Ridge. Numerous Confederates remembered seeing him at various places along the ridge that morning. One Confederate thought Lee had come to the conclusion that the Federal center was weak based on reconnaissance he had performed from "the Federal position from the college [seminary] cupola …"[70]

Before the attack, Lee rode the field with Longstreet and, at some point, Pickett joined the party. One Confederate from Heth's division recalled the morning in detail. Lee, Longstreet, and Pickett:

> rode together up and down in front of our line several times – at least three times, if not more – observing our assignment, but principally with field-glasses, observing the position and movements of the Federals. Seeming to be as yet undetermined what to do, they rode to the rear and engaged in earnest conversation. Then they returned to our front, and, together, rode up and down our line again. This was ominous, and showed plainly how hazardous these officers regarded the undertaking.[71]

Another conference involving Lee, Longstreet, and A. P. Hill took place "on the trunk of a fallen tree some fifty or sixty paces where I sat my horse on the right of our division," recalled Birkett Fry. "Staff officers and couriers began to move briskly about, and a few minutes after General Pettigrew rode up and informed me that after a heavy cannonade we would assault the position in our front …" [72]

Lee journeyed multiple times across the field. Col. Joseph Mayo, 3rd Virginia Infantry, remembered "General Lee passed in front of us, coming from the right, and a little while afterwards every man in the ranks was made to know exactly what was the work which had been cut out for us." Artillery battalion commander Maj. James Dearing rode as far as the skirmish line to observe the Federals when Lee saw him. Shortly thereafter, a courier arrived at Dearing's position. Dearing expected a request for information from the commanding general but soon learned otherwise. "Major Dearing, I do not approve of young officers needlessly exposing themselves; your place is with your batteries," said Lee.[73]

Lee reviewed the troops and their positions for the assault. Gen. Isaac Trimble reportedly related to one Confederate that,

> General Lee was closing the inspection of the column in the front of [Alfred] Scales' brigade, which had been fearfully cut up in the first day's conflict, having lost very heavily, including all its regimental officers with its gallant commander, and noticing many of Scales' men with their heads and hands bandaged, he said to General Trimble: "Many of these poor boys should go to the rear, they are not able for duty." Passing his eyes searchingly along the weakened ranks of Scales' brigade, he turned to General Trimble and touchingly added, "I miss in this brigade the faces of many dear friends." As he rode away he looked mournfully at the column and muttered more to himself than to General Trimble, "The attack must succeed."[74]

As the clock struck one o'clock and Confederate cannoneers took their position to open the bombardment, Lee took his seat "in rear of R. H. Anderson's division. From that point he could see the movements of the left wing of troops which made the charge." What raced through Lee's mind at this time is lost to history. Before him lay an attack ordered over the objections of his top lieutenant, an attack which culminated all the previous maneuvers, hardship, toil, and battles that had brought the army to this point, an attack in which many men, especially those from his beloved Virginia, were doomed to die. Lee would not, could not, leave the field without one last mighty roll of the iron dice of battle. He knew the odds, the costs, and above all, the potential reward. At the pivotal moment, Lee did not flinch.[75]

Finally the assault time arrived. The cannonade ceased, and Pickett's division moved forward to Lee's right with Fry's and Marshall's brigades following behind the Virginians' advance. Near the present-day Virginia Monument, Lee dismounted and seated himself on a stump with an oilcloth spread out for a seat. "In his left arm were the reins of his horse 'Traveller,' while the elbow of his arm was on his right leg supporting his bowed head in his right hand, which attitude impressed me that he was in prayer," recalled J. Thompson Brown. One can only wonder what Lee's thoughts were at this time.[76]

The smoke had not yet cleared from the cannonade when things began to go awry. Perceiving that Brockenbrough's Virginia brigade had broken on the extreme left flank, Lee turned to Venable and ordered the officer to take him to the spot. On the way, the first man Lee met was a Mississippi captain borne on a litter who managed to raise himself up and cheer his commander. The wounded grew more numerous as Lee rode further. One soldier "insisted on grasping his hand."[77]

Brockenbrough's men were beyond rallying by this time. Lee turned Traveller and rode back south along Seminary Ridge. Along the way, Lee ordered Brigadier General Ambrose Wright's brigade, which had marched 500 to 600 yards out in front of Seminary Ridge to cover the Confederate repulse, further to the right, or south, and behind Wilcox's re-forming soldiers. Wright's brigade would provide a portion of the defensive line in case of a Union counterattack.[78]

Lee next encountered "Pickett and a number of his staff officers at the foot of a wooded hill, a little to the left of the point from which his troops had started on the charge." One Confederate estimated there to be 300 to 400 soldiers in the area at the time, with General Pickett mounted and "talking to the men here and there." One of the lone Confederate battle flags to escape was that of the 24th Virginia, borne by Charles Belcher. Waving the flag, Belcher shouted at Pickett, "General, let us go at them again!" Lee rode alone into this mass, and the men instinctively moved toward him.[79]

Pickett broke into tears upon Lee's approach. The two men shook hands. "General Pickett," Lee began, "place your division in rear of this hill and be ready to repel the advance of the enemy should they follow up their advantage."

"General Lee," Pickett responded, "I have no division now. Armistead is down, Garnett is down, and Kemper is mortally wounded." Lee moved to assuage broken commander. He spoke "in a slow and distinct manner. Anyone could see that he, too, felt the repulse and slaughter of the division, whose remains he viewed."

"General Pickett," Lee said," your men did all that men could do; the fault is entirely my own."[80]

Lee turned to see four men bearing a stretcher off the field. Turning to Robert Bright, Lee queried, "Captain, what officer is that they are bearing off?" Bright replied, "General Kemper."

"I must speak to him," Lee said and with that he urged Traveller toward the litter, leaving Pickett behind. As Lee approached, the litter bearers halted and Kemper, feeling this motion, opened his eyes. "General Kemper, I hope you are not badly hurt," Lee inquired.

"Yes, General," said Kemper, "I think they have got me this time."

"Oh, I trust not! I trust not," said Lee. "Can I do anything for you?"

"General Lee, you can do nothing for me," Kemper responded. "I am mortally wounded, but see to it that full justice is done my men who made this charge."

"I will," Lee told Kemper, and then he turned Traveller to continue riding through the crowd.[81]

About this time, Longstreet rode up in company with British observer Col. Arthur Fremantle. Like Lee, Longstreet expected the Union to counterattack. "Sending my staff officers to assist in collecting the fragments of my command," Longstreet wrote, "I rode to my line of batteries, knowing they were all I had in front of the impending attack, resolved to drive it back or sacrifice my last gun and man." Earlier, Fremantle had given Longstreet some rum and begged the general to keep the flask as a memento of the occasion. Whether by liquid or personal courage, Longstreet appeared "calm and self-possessed," according to Fremantle. "I could now thoroughly appreciate the term bulldog …. Difficulties seem to make no other impression upon him than to make him a little more savage."[82]

Perhaps this "savage" mood influenced Longstreet's earlier encounter with Gen. James Pettigrew. When Pettigrew informed Longstreet that "he was unable to bring his men up again," Longstreet caustically responded, "Very well; never mind, then, General; just let them remain where they are: the enemy's going to advance and will spare you the trouble."[83]

Pettigrew met with a different response from Lee. The commanding general had just turned from telling Col. Samuel G. Shepherd of the 7th Tennessee, "Colonel, rally your men and protect our artillery. The fault is mine, but it will be all right in the end." Pettigrew walked by and said, "General Lee, I am responsible for my Brigade, but not for my Division." One eyewitness related that Pettigrew's arm was "black and shattered by a grapeshot." General Lee leaned down from the saddle and grasped Pettigrew's unwounded hand saying, "General Pettigrew, it is all my fault." Another observer remembered Lee saying, "General, I am sorry to see you wounded. Go to the rear."[84]

Throughout the crisis, Lee sought to rally and encourage his men. According to Alexander, Lee stated to almost all soldiers that passed him, "Form your ranks again when you get back to cover. We want all good men to hold together now … It was all my fault this time."[85] Fremantle recalled that Lee said,

> "all this will come right in the end; we'll talk it over afterwards; but, in the meantime, all good men must rally. We want all good and true men just now," &c. He spoke to all the wounded men that passed him, and the slightly wounded he exhorted "to bind up [their] hurts and take up a musket" in this emergency. Very few failed to answer his appeal, and I saw many badly wounded men take off their hats and cheer him. He said to me, "This has been a sad day for us, Colonel – a sad day, but we can't expect always to gain victories."[86]

Although many were rallied by Lee's appeals, certainly others passed him by. Fremantle pointed out to Lee that one soldier lying in a shallow ditch did not appear hurt. Hearing this statement, the man started groaning "dismally. Finding appeals to his patriotism of no avail, General Lee had him ignominiously set on his legs by some neighboring gunners."[87]

Amidst the grim visages of broken regiments, brigades, and divisions on the Confederate side, a cheer arose from the distance. Lee turned aside from speaking to Alexander to beckon Capt. Frederick Colston, "ride forward and see what that cheering means." Perhaps Lee presumed that Ewell's men had met with some success on Culp's Hill. Colston writes,

> I started forward, but my horse sulked and my spurs had no effect on him, so I asked a wounded soldier who was passing to hand me a stick, which was lying on the ground. With that I whacked him, and Gen. Lee called out: "Don't whip him, Captain; it does no good. I had a foolish horse once, and kind treatment is the best." I found out that it was a Union general galloping down his line, and so reported to Gen. Lee, who thanked me and said to Col. Alexander, as I backed my horse off: "I can understand what they have to cheer for, but I thought it might be our own people."[88]

At one point, Lee was scanning the horizon when Gen. Cadmus Wilcox dashed up on horseback. With tears streaming down his cheeks, he said "General Lee, I came into Pennsylvania with one of the finest brigades in the army of Northern Virginia and now my people are all gone. They have all been killed." Lee clasped Wilcox's hand in his own and responded "Never mind, General, all this has been my fault – it is I that have lost this fight, and you must help me out of it the best way you can."[89]

Lee remained along the line for "an hour or so." He constantly scanned the Cemetery Ridge horizon for any sign of a Union counterattack. It was a pensive time all around and Lee's solid equipoise served him well. Alexander states,

> He expected Meade to follow the fugitives of Pickett's division, & he intended, himself, to have a hand in rallying them, & in the fight which would follow. He had the combative instinct in him as strongly developed as any man living. No soldier could have looked on at & listened to the fight we had just been making, without a mighty stirring of every fibre in his frame, & a yearning to have some share in it. And the general had come out determined, if there *was* any more, that he would be in the thick of it. I've sometimes felt sorry that there wasn't! I'd like so to have seen him in it![90]

Alas! Meade did not come and there was nothing left to do but leave the field to the enemy; the very thought rocked his inner-soul … but there remained no choice. Lee turned Traveller and rode silently down Seminary Ridge, his thoughts lost to history.

Time has shown kindness to General Robert Edward Lee in the aftermath of Pickett's Charge regarding his effect on the broken masses of soldiers. Beyond a doubt, Lee's presence on the field did rally the troops – at least, the few who actually came into contact with him. In direct terms though, three brigades of Virginians, 5,500 men, had suffered approximately 50 percent casualties in forty-five minutes. The shock resulting from this combat situation is more than words can adequately describe. This is the story of the "big" picture in the aftermath of Pickett's Charge.

When we last left George Pickett, he and General Lee had spoken and parted ways. Pickett turned to his men and said "You can go back to the wagons and rest until you are wanted."[91] Capt. Henry T. Owens of the 18th Virginia recalled what happened next on or near Seminary Ridge:

Colonel Fremantle says, "General Lee rode among Pickett's men after the repulse, and with a few kindly words rallied the broken troops; that he saw many men with empty sleeve seize a musket and turn readily into line; that there was less noise and confusion than on an ordinary review." Here are the facts of this rally of Pickett's division. An attempt was made on the brow of Seminary Ridge, in front of the Confederate batteries, by a couple of officers, to rally the fugitives, but the effort (under a heavy cross-fire from both sides) failed, and then commenced a rout that soon increased to a stampede and almost demoralization of all the survivors of this noted charge without distinction of regiments or commands.

> A few hundred yards behind the Confederate batteries there is a ravine along which runs a country road that makes at one place an abrupt angle by turning or bending to the left. At this point there is a bluff on one side and a slight swamp on the other, creating a narrow pass through which the fugitives, without distinction of rank, officers and privates side by side, pushed, poured and rushed in a continuous stream, throwing away guns, blankets, and haversacks as they hurried on in confusion toward the rear. Here another effort was made to rally the broken troops, and all sorts of appeals and threats made to officers and men who turned a deaf ear and hurried on, some of the officers even jerking loose with an oath from the hand laid on their shoulders to attract attention. At last a few privates hearkening to the appeals halted and formed a nucleus around which about thirty others soon rallied, and with these a picket was formed across the road as a barrier to further retreat and the stream of stragglers damned up several hundred strong.
>
> General Pickett came down from the direction of the battle-field weeping bitterly, and said to the officer commanding the picket: "Don't stop any of my men. Tell them to come to the camp we occupied last night;" and passed on himself alone toward the rear. Other officers passed by, but the picket was retained at this point until Major Charles Marshall came galloping up from the rear, and inquired what this guard was for and who placed it here; and finding the officer without orders, he moved the picket back a few hundred yards and extended the line along the stream or little creek found there. Here the guard did duty until sundown, arresting all stragglers from the battle-field, and Colonel Marshall took them forward himself, with no other help, to where General Lee was on the field, and it was to these men that Colonel Fremantle heard General Lee address his kindly words, but none of them had empty sleeves, as all the wounded were allowed to pass to the rear. When Colonel Marshall first came up to the picket across the road he had come from a point still farther in rear, where he had been sent by General Lee to rally the stragglers, if possible, and failing to do so was returning to report to General Lee. Colonel Marshall came down several times before sundown after the stragglers collected by the picket, and carried up to the field probably a total of four or five hundred men during the evening.[92]

July 3 permanently decimated the brigades from Pickett's division. All three brigade commanders were lost and the officer core decimated to such an extent that "there were not even enough company officers and non-commissioned officers enough left to make formal reports," noted Walter Harrison. "The sun that had risen so brightly upon our confident hopes, buoyant in anticipation of victory, set in sullen, angry sadness upon that field of carnage, where our bravest and best lay weltering in their gore and glory," he continued, "where our cup of bitterness was

filled to the overflowing, and where our resources were so crippled, that we never – no, never – recovered from the blow."[93]

In the following days, Lee and his staff exacerbated the situation by giving Pickett's division the task of guarding Union prisoners on the retreat. Pickett felt the assignment of this duty should fall on less worn troops, and he also did not like the separation of his command from the rest of the army. He protested this task in a letter to Lee that is now lost. In turn, Lee sought to assuage the distraught commander, assuring Pickett that his Virginians were only chosen for the good of "the public service" and regretted "that it has occasioned you and your officers any disappointment."[94] He concluded by assuring Pickett,

> No one grieves more than I do at the loss suffered by your noble division in the recent conflict, or honors it more for its bravery and gallantry. It will afford me heartfelt satisfaction, when an opportunity occurs, to do all in my power to recruit its diminished ranks, and to reorganize it in the most efficient manner.[95]

Pickett had the letter published and read to the troops.

Despite the abatement of this minor crisis, Pickett still held bitter feelings about the outcome of Pickett's Charge. In August he filed his official report with headquarters. This particular report, barring some new discovery, is lost to history. Its contents have caused much speculation among Gettysburg historians. Thomas R. Friend, a courier on Pickett's staff, left the best clue about the lost document:

> During the charge across the field, he [Pickett] kept his eye on the left, never looking for a moment to the right of column, showing that he feared the left. In regard to his first report of the battle to General R. E. Lee, which was returned by General Lee, with the request that it be modified, General Pickett threw the blame on Pettigrew's division, because he afterward said that General Lee had put on his left "a division that was whipped the day before." General Pickett knowing that Pettigrew's division had had a hard fought battle the day before and were badly used up, and were in no condition to support him in a charge that was unparalleled in the annals of war. General Pickett knew that McLaws's division was held in reserve, which was necessary should there be a defeat, and, as soon as the left gave way, he sent after reinforcements. It was known by every one on the field that Pettigrew's division gave way before Pickett's men had mounted the wall, and if Pickett's men had been properly supported, we would have carried the day.[96]

Lee continued to follow the personal pattern set forth after the repulse of Pickett's Charge: He sought to squelch any personal animosity or dissension among fellow officers in order to maintain cohesion within the army. To this end, he responded to Pickett as follows:

> You and your men have crowned yourselves with glory; but we have the enemy to fight, and must carefully, at this critical moment, guard against dissensions which the reflections in your report would create. I will, therefore, suggest that you destroy both copy and original, substituting one confined to casualties merely.[97]

Pickett complied with Lee's suggestion and, as a result, his original report will probably never come to light. Lee held no personal grudges against Pickett for July 3; how could he? Lee had ordered the attack. However, derelictions of duty always drew the general's ire and, at the end of

the war, at the Battle of Saylor's Creek, when Pickett left his command in the face of the enemy, Lee reportedly issued orders relieving him of command.

Pickett, on the other hand, seemed to harbor ill-will toward Lee as a result of Gettysburg, although it seems likely that his relief from command at the end of the war also strongly influenced his feelings. Regardless, Col. John S. Mosby became the witness to a reunion of the two generals after the war:

> In March, 1870, I was walking across the bridge connecting the Ballard and Exchange hotels, in Richmond, and to my surprise I met General Lee and his daughter. The general was pale and haggard, and did not look like the Apollo I had known in the army. After a while I went to his room; our conversation was on current topics. I felt oppressed by the great memories that his presence revived, and while both of us were thinking about the war, neither of us referred to it.
>
> After leaving the room, I met General Pickett, and told him that I had just been with Lee. He remarked that, if I would go with him, he would call and pay respects to the general, but he did not want to be alone with him. So I went back with Pickett; the interview was cold and formal, and evidently embarrassing to both. It was their only meeting after the war.
>
> In a few minutes I rose and left the room, together with General Pickett. He then spoke very bitterly of General Lee, calling him "that old man."
>
> "He had my division massacred at Gettysburg," Pickett said.
>
> "Well, it made you immortal," I replied.
>
> I rather suspect that Pickett gave a wrong reason for his unfriendly feelings. In May, 1892, at the University of Virginia, I took breakfast with Professor Venable, who had been on Lee's staff. He told me that some days before the surrender at Appomattox, General Lee ordered Pickett under arrest – I suppose for the Five Forks affair. I think the professor said that he carried the order. I remember very well his adding that, on the retreat, Pickett passed them, and that General Lee said, with deep feeling, "Is that man still with this army?"[98]

Longstreet and Lee: An Appraisal

The day July 3, 1863, forever links Longstreet and Lee. It culminated a campaign and a battle that carried all the South's hopes for independence. But in one hour it was all over, and Pickett's Charge passed into history.

From the time the guns fell silent, Lee sought to stifle all recriminations and acrimony over the defeat. For the most part, he was successful. But after the war, and again after his death, Lee's supporters were quick to defend his actions and place elsewhere the blame for the defeat following Pickett's Charge. The principal target for these accusations became James Longstreet.

Longstreet did not help his own cause in the post-war years. In 1865, he spoke to journalist William Swinton, and his comments were subsequently published in *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac.* Two years later he advocated reconciliation with the North in a New Orleans newspaper. His fellow Southerners did not appreciate the sentiment and boycotted his cotton-broker business. Forced to leave the business, Longstreet turned to former enemies for succor and committed political apostasy by joining the Republican Party. As a result, President Ulysses S. Grant helped Longstreet gain successive patronage positions. All in all, the old general's conduct primed the pump for recriminations.[99]

In the 1870s, former Confederates started publicly attacking Longstreet, the primary assailants being Jubal Early, William Pendleton, and J. William Jones. The movement sought to castigate

Longstreet and absolve Lee of all blame. Early, especially, filled the pages of the *Southern Historical Society Papers* with vitriolic prose.[100]

As a result, Longstreet's writings bear the mark of a man under severe criticism and this greatly shaped what he wrote. For this reason one must use caution with anything coming from Longstreet's pen. Nevertheless, his writings are unavoidable for a historian for he was the only recorder for many events – Lee wrote nothing on Gettysburg after the war.

Today, Gettysburg buffs still debate who should bear the lion's share of responsibility for the failures of Pickett's Charge, Lee or Longstreet. The debate has degenerated into factional sides – any criticism of one party is dismissed by the other side as pure partisanship. In the end, neither Lee nor Longstreet is entirely culpable or guiltless. Longstreet held tactical control of the operation while Lee insisted on its execution.

As mentioned above, Longstreet and Lee did not coordinate well. Longstreet was not prepared to attack at dawn on July 3. In his report and later writings, he made the argument that his proposed march around the Union flank was far more feasible. In light of what actually happened at Pickett's Charge, this movement has tantalized Gettysburg buffs for years – despite the obvious impracticality of the entire plan. The main point overlooked in all this debate is that Longstreet's failure to have his command ready altered the entire assault timetable. Despite this setback, Lee tried to coordinate with Ewell for a 10 A.M. attack, but Longstreet still could not complete his preparations. In a post-war conversation, Lee complained that "victory would have been won if he could have gotten one decided simultaneous attack on the whole line."[101]

Lee probably sent verbal orders for a renewal of the offensive to Longstreet on the night of July 2. This was a mistake on the commanding general's part, for it allowed Longstreet room for discretion and there is always potential for misunderstanding of verbal orders. But this does not excuse Longstreet. If the much-maligned Richard Ewell could comply with the orders, then so could have Longstreet. Longstreet knew full well the wishes of his commanding general; he just chose not to follow them.

Once Lee arrived at Longstreet's headquarters, the two men reconnoitered the proposed assault area. (This may have been the first time Lee saw the ground first hand.) During the course of their conversation, whatever Longstreet said was sufficient for Lee to change his mind, for two possible reasons: The first is that Lee agreed with Longstreet's assessment of the ground and therefore modified the attack plan. The second is that Lee was simply tired of dealing with an obstinate subordinate. If Lee's best judgment was to attack from the Peach Orchard and Seminary Ridge using four divisions, he should not have yielded.

As far as the actual assault, Longstreet felt in the post-war years that he had done everything in his power to communicate the plan of attack to his troops. He writes,

> After our troops were all arranged for assault, General Lee rode with me twice over our lines to see that everything was arranged according to his wishes. He was told that we had been more particular in giving the orders than ever before; that the commanders had been sent for, and the point of attack had been carefully designated, and that the commanders had been directed to communicate to their subordinates, and through them to every soldier in the command, the work that was before them, so that they should again rode over the field once, if not twice, so that there was really no room for misconstruction or misunderstanding of his wishes.[102]

Longstreet truly felt that the he had meticulously complied with Lee's wishes. To a certain extent, he did prepare his command. Numerous Confederates from privates to colonels recalled the briefing before the attack. In no other attack in the Civil War did the privates have the expectations explained to them in such detail. On a larger scale, Longstreet also successfully

informed the division commanders and, hence, the brigade commanders, the objective of the assault. But, as they say, "the devil is in the details."

As this paper has described in depth, once the assault began, Confederate commanders had to make adjustments for the actual conditions on the field. In other words, they had to guide left or right, adjust the position of support troops such as Armistead and Wilcox, and even adapt to how the troops would begin. (After the attack, Longstreet still thought Pickett had been the division of direction.)

It also appears that very little thought went into what would happen upon a breakthrough – there were no provisions made for a possible third line of support. Longstreet overlooked all these little details, and it came back to hamper the Confederates. In his defense, he oversaw an attack on a scale that he had never attempted before. Details that are transparent to us today probably escaped him at that time. Physical exhaustion may have been a factor also.

Longstreet also did not sufficiently communicate with Hill's troops. For example, Pettigrew apparently did not know the troops were to go forward until Pickett moved out. The tepid relationship between Longstreet and Hill probably contributed to this situation. Compounding the problem was a possible misunderstanding regarding when and to what extent Longstreet took command of Hill's troops. He only took command of Anderson's division when the situation was too late for any effect. On the other hand, if there was a misunderstanding, Lee has to share part of the blame. The truth probably lies between Longstreet's attitude and Lee's managerial style. On July 3, the two were not working well together.[103]

Longstreet's mindset on July 3 begs a closer look. One unguarded exchange with Alexander serves as a window into his mood. As Pickett's division advanced, Longstreet stated, "I don't want to make this attack – I believe it will fail – I do not see how it can succeed – I would not make it even now, but that Gen. Lee has ordered & expects it." Everything added together begs the question: How much did Longstreet's attitude affect planning and operations on July 3?[104]

One indication of Longstreet's mindset is the significant time gap in the deployment of Pickett's division and the commencement of the attack. In his numerous writings, Alexander notes that he began to redeploy his artillery for a concentrated bombardment of Cemetery Ridge at 9 A.M. He stated two times, 10 A.M. and 11 A.M., for the completion of the redeployment. Pickett's division arrived behind Seminary Ridge around 7 A.M. The Virginians deployed for the attack around 8 to 10 A.M. If all things were prepared, Longstreet could have tried to attack in conjunction with Ewell close to 10 A.M. Instead, two to three hours passed before the cannonade actually began at approximately 1 P.M. Longstreet could clearly hear the guns over at Culp's Hill and he knew his commander's wishes. Apparently he could not bring himself to order the assault forward or, as he wrote, "the work of preparation" was not yet completed. Yet again, perhaps Longstreet felt Lee would call the assault off if the coordination was not achieved.[105]

Longstreet is very consistent about not wanting to make the assault, writing, "That day at Gettysburg was one of the saddest days of my life. I foresaw what my men would meet and would gladly have given up my position rather than share in the responsibilities of that day."[106] In point of fact, Longstreet did try to abdicate his position. He actually gave the decision to send the infantry forward to Colonel E. P. Alexander. Authors have related the story many times, nevertheless, it helps to read his message sent to Alexander before the cannonade began one more time:

> Colonel: If the artillery fire does not have the effect to drive off the enemy, or greatly demoralize him, so as to make our effort pretty certain, I would prefer that you not advise General Pickett to make the charge. I shall rely a great deal upon your good judgment to determine the matter, and shall expect you to let General Pickett know when the moment offers.[107]

Alexander recalled having a "sudden shock" at receiving this message which "presented the whole business to me in a new light." Alexander responded that if Longstreet had any alternative

to the assault, he had better state it before the guns opened. Longstreet once again threw the decision back on Alexander to verify whether the artillery had made a great enough impact to send the infantry forward. Can you imagine, dear reader, on the brink of the greatest assault of the war, one on which the entire stake of the battle and possible independence rides, receiving a message from a lieutenant general that you, a colonel of artillery, are going to order forward the infantry?[108]

British observer Col. Arthur Fremantle noted Longstreet's actions after he had sent the first message to Alexander, writing:

> At noon all Longstreet's dispositions were made. His troops for attack were deployed into line, and lying down in the woods; his batteries were ready to open. The general then dismounted and went to sleep for a short time.[109]

Longstreet later explained that he wished "to study for some new thought that might aid the assaulting column." This series of events speaks volumes about his attitude and demeanor on July 3.[110]

Finally the appointed time came. The artillery had done its best; now the infantry must come forward. Alexander had written to Pickett, "If you are coming at all, you must come at once, or I cannot give you proper support; but the enemy's fire has not slackened at all …" Now, the famous exchange between Pickett and Longstreet would take place. Longstreet recorded the event in these words: "After I had read the note, Pickett said to me: "General, shall I advance?" My feelings had so overcome me that I would not speak, for fear of betraying my want of confidence in him. I bowed affirmation, and turned to mount my horse."[111]

Only Longstreet recorded this conversation for posterity, at least until now. The following newspaper article presents a different version of the conversation. In 1902, the *Gettysburg Compiler* reprinted a story from the New Orleans *Picayune* written by a former Federal officer who claimed to have spoken to Pickett after the war. The article has shortcomings, but as it stands as the only other version of events, it is included for critique.

Longstreet Didn't Order The Charge:
New Story of Gettysburg's Fatal Crisis Told by Pickett

> A writer in the New Orleans *Picayune* says: "General Wilson, of the old army, during a conversation with some friends in New York recently related a conversation with General Pickett upon the subject of Gettysburg."
>
> "Pickett, Longstreet and myself were old West Pointers and warm friends," said General Wilson. "At the close of our late unpleasantness I was sitting in my office in State street, when who should enter but my old friend General Pickett. We had not met since the commencement of the War, and had many things to talk about.
>
> "In the course of the conversation I remarked: 'You had a pretty close call at Gettysburg, didn't you, Pickett?' 'Yes,' he said, 'but let me tell you something about my charge that has never been published. When orders were given to form the column of attack I formed the column and then rode through the ranks to see if everything was right. As I finished the inspection I rode to the rear to report to General Longstreet and to receive orders to move. I found Longstreet sitting on the top rail of a fence whittling a stick. Saluting the General I said: 'General, my column is ready to charge. Shall I charge?' Receiving no answer from the General and waiting a reasonable time, I returned to my command and again through the ranks.

> "A second time I reported to the General with the same result. A third time I reported the General was still sitting on the fence. As I received no answer I remarked: 'General, if I am to make the charge, it must be made now or it will be too late. Shall I make the charge?' Without saying a word he simply bowed his head. I immediately rode off and made the charge, and you know the result."
>
> "When I asked," said General Wilson, "how he accounted for Longstreet's course, he said he believed Longstreet was opposed to the movement, and delayed giving the orders, hoping that General Lee would change his mind and countermand the orders."[112]

In retrospect, July 3 marked a nadir of James Longstreet's leadership during the Civil War. Lee had not incorporated many of his plans and suggestions, leaving the top lieutenant brooding and depressed. The previous day his corps had attacked the Federal position against his better judgment, suffered immense casualties, and gained very little ground, in his opinion. The next day his chief asked him to attack again. Longstreet looked across that field, foresaw another sacrifice of his men, and tried everything outside of duty to avoid giving the order to go forward. Longstreet did not *intentionally* harm Confederate chances; however, like anyone tasked with a job they do not want to perform, his work reflected this reluctance. "He [Lee] knew that I did not believe that success was possible," Longstreet later wrote, "that care and time should be taken to give the troops the benefit of position and the grounds; and he should have put an officer in charge who had more confidence in his plan." Unfortunately, the Southern people did not have the full benefit of James Longstreet's sagacity on July 3.[113]

Robert E. Lee bears culpability of his own for the attack. After all, he insisted on the assault going forward. If the Confederates had won a victory at Gettysburg, Lee certainly would receive credit; therefore, with defeat, he must share the blame.

In an ideal situation, a subordinate who believed in the plan would have led the planning. But, to whom was Lee to turn? A. P. Hill did not have any corps experience. Richard Ewell commanded on the left flank and had the same lack of experience as Hill. Therefore, the task fell to Longstreet. For better or worse, Lee had to rely on his most experienced commander for the highest stake assault of the war.

Lee has often received criticism for attacking on the third day. In order to understand the decision, one must understand Lee's mindset. The choice to attack was not "if" but "where." He believed that his army had won the first and second day of battle, and he was not going to leave the field without another try. This decision constitutes the core of Lee's generalship – maintaining the initiative, unheralded confidence, and supreme audacity.[114]

Over the years, many historians have asserted that Lee came to the conclusion to attack Cemetery Ridge because he had tried both flanks and found them strongly defended. Therefore, Meade must have weakened the center. This is not true. As this paper has hopefully shown, the idea to attack the center came about from the evolution of the plan. In the end, Lee shortened the original attack front and the sole objective became Cemetery Ridge.

Today, many visitors look across that open ground and still wonder "What was he thinking?" Before the assault, Lee rode the ground with the eye of a trained military engineer. On the ground of Pickett's advance, he saw swales that gave the ability to hide the infantry and shorten the distance to the Union lines. Hopefully, the Virginians could close the distance to the enemy before receiving any substantial casualties.

On Pettigrew's and Trimble's front, the ground provided no shelter for the advancing troops. However, the use of the land was, in some ways, unavoidable. Lee thought he could compensate for this with an overwhelming artillery bombardment that would enable the infantry to advance without facing counter-battery fire.

Lee erred in judgment in the troops he chose for the assault. His decision, as stated earlier, resulted from the plan's ongoing evolution. Pettigrew was originally a support to the attack; now,

his men were part of the main attack force – Lee should have looked more closely into the troops' composition. Furthermore, the number of men or brigades he planned for did not constitute a large-enough assault force for the anticipated impact. According to one Confederate, Lee held back the rest of Hill's corps in case Longstreet's attack failed. Nevertheless, he should have strengthened the assault column from somewhere. He did not give Longstreet sufficient troops to meet his objective.[115]

Lee expected Longstreet to rearrange and launch his assault in conjunction with Ewell at 10 A.M. That time obviously passed without an assault. One must wonder, with the timetable thrown off and the ability, at least on the Culp's Hill front, to achieve simultaneous pressure diminished, why did Lee carry forward with Pickett's Charge? The answer, once again, lies in the artillery.

The artillery bombardment was not designed to just create smoke. Lee hoped for an effective bombardment that would suppress the Union batteries and demoralize the infantry. With the achievement of these objectives, marching across that field would become much easier. For this purpose, Lee amassed 147 cannon, which should, in theory, have been sufficient to achieve the objective set out for them. No Civil War commander had ever focused that many guns on a single target.[116]

The artillery also had another purpose, one often overlooked by those studying the battle today. The batteries were to move forward with the infantry and give direct artillery support both to the front and the flanks. The flank support would deter any Federal movements in that area and allow the full weight of the assault column to impact Cemetery Ridge.[117]

In actuality, the bombardment proved very ineffective. Alexander had gauged the time for the bombardment at roughly twenty to thirty minutes. In that length of time, the Confederate artillery was not able to suppress their Union counterparts. Therefore, the guns kept firing. By the time Pickett advanced, after over an hour of shelling, the Confederate artillery had expended all of its ammunition and was unable to provide support for the advancing infantry column.[118]

Alexander informed Longstreet of the ammunition situation as Pickett's men started forward. Longstreet was shocked and ordered Alexander to halt Pickett in order to replenish the artillery ammunition. Alexander stated that the effects of the bombardment would dissipate in the time it took to refill the ammunition chests. The critical decision point had come, but Longstreet did not feel he had the authority to call off the attack with Lee nearby. Therefore the infantry went forward, and the rest is history.[119]

Lee noted in his report that he was unaware that the artillery had run out of ammunition and "were unable to reply, or render the necessary support to the attacking party." One does not know what Lee would have done, had someone informed him. Nevertheless, an important part of the plan went unexecuted.[120]

Finally, Lee's decision to attack lies in the high morale and sense of invincibility he and his men felt. Perhaps Lee exuded too much confidence at Gettysburg or, as Longstreet stated, "lost the matchless equipoise that usually characterized him, and that whatever mistakes were made were not so much matters of deliberate judgment as the impulses of a great mind disturbed by unparalleled conditions."[121] Nevertheless, as a commander Lee never showed more faith in his men's ability than on July 3rd. Whatever the causes of defeat at Gettysburg, Lee's confidence was unshaken:

> The conduct of the troops was all that I could desire or expect, and they deserve success so far as it can be deserved by heroic valor and fortitude. More may have been required of them than they were able to perform, but my admiration of their noble qualities and confidence in their ability to cope successfully with the enemy has suffered no abatement from the issue of this protracted and sanguinary conflict.[122]

Throughout his Civil War career, Lee exhibited a tendency to make costly frontal attacks, especially when faced with a stalemate on the battlefield. While the Confederate attacks at Malvern Hill and the Wilderness serve as cases in point, the most telling example is Pickett's Charge. Pickett's Charge, plain and simple, was a bad idea – a price the South paid for Lee's aggressive nature.

"Remember that I am true to my country and my greatest regret at dying is that she is not free" – Jeremiah Gage

Sometimes lost in the heated analysis of leaders and command decisions is the human cost. No soldier of Pickett's Charge reflects this more poignantly than Sergeant Jeremiah Gage of the 11th Mississippi Infantry. In 1860, Gage had only recently finished his degree in the literary department at the University of Mississippi. He had just entered the law school when the war began. Most if not all of the entire student body enlisted for "The Cause" in Company A of the 11th Mississippi. The regiment subsequently served with General Barnard Bee at First Manassas, fought at Seven Pines, charged Gaines Mill with Hood's Texans, and broke through the Miller's Cornfield at Sharpsburg. The 11th missed the July 1 fight at Gettysburg but came up in time to join the ranks for Pickett's Charge.

A pre-war photo of Jeremiah Gage. He is wearing a pledge pin from Delta Psi fraternity, University of Mississippi. Courtesy of Mrs. Gage McClendon Black.

Jeremiah Gage had served in all of these engagements. At Seven Pines, one veteran recalled that during a "furious fusillade," the order was given to lie down. Everyone took to cover except for the colonel and Gage, "who had seventeen bullets through his clothes. He did not know what fear was." A short time later he suffered a severe wound at Gaines Mill. At Gettysburg, Gage and the 11th Mississippi were positioned on the left flank of Pettigrew's line. During the bombardment, perhaps again Gage refused to lie down. Regardless, he was wounded before the assault began. The poignancy of this story, amidst the playing out of countless other sad tales across the battlefield, gives Jeremiah Gage's final moments a singularity all their own. The following reminiscences were penned by Dr. Joseph Holt, a surgeon of the 11th Mississippi:

> Early on the morning of July 3d, I selected the nearest possible cover for wounded behind a raised roadway about two and one half feet high, constructed to allow wagons to be driven in upon the lower floor of a barn and unload. Fortunately it ran parallel with the Federal Batteries opposite, and the crest of the ridge for about thirty yards. . .

Presently the wounded began to come in crouchingly; for many were killed and wounded before the charge began. The first to arrive, borne on a litter, was a princely fellow and favored son of the Eleventh Mississippi. I saw in an instant a condition of terrible shock. Keeping everybody close to the ground, I turned to him and he pointed to his left arm. I quickly exposed it and found that a cannon ball had nearly torn it away between the elbow and the shoulder. I made some encouraging remark when he smiled and said: "Why, Doctor, that is nothing; here is where I am really hurt," and he laid back the blanket and exposed the lower abdomen torn from left to right by a cannon shot, largely carrying away the bladder, much intestine, and a third of the right half of the pelvis; but in both wounds so grinding and twisting the tissues that there was no hemorrhage. I then surveyed his personality, observing the tender devotion on the part of his litter bearers, and I saw a singularly attractive creature. Through his deathly pallor I could detect a sunburned blond, who in health would show a strong ruddy countenance; a large head with a tousled shock of reddish golden locks like a mane, with the musculature and form of an athlete. Deferentially polite, there was something singularly self-confident and manly about him …

Without the slightest change of voice, he asked: "Doctor, how long have I to live?" "A very few hours," I replied. "Doctor, I am in great agony; let me die easy, dear Doctor; I would do the same for you." His soul peered from the depths of his blue eyes in an appeal of anguish that cut me to the heart and I replied, "You dear, noble fellow, I will see to it that you shall die easy."

No word or detail of this scene had faded from my memory. There was no thought of the dramatic; it was dreadfully genuine and naturally spontaneous, in the unconscious creating and acting of a grander tragedy than we might ever hope to play …

I called for, and my hospital knapsack bearer, Jim Rowell, quickly handed me a two ounce bottle of black drop – a concentrated solution of opium, much stronger than laudanum.

I poured a tablespoonful of it into a tin cup, with a little water, and offered it; but before his hand could reach it, a thought flashed into my mind, and withdrawing the cup, I asked, "Have you no message to leave?"

It startled him, and in a low moaning wail, he cried: "My mother, O, my darling mother, how could I have forgotten you? Quick! I want to write."

By that time, all who were crouching under the low shelter, were crowded around, oblivious of their own injuries and weeping silently.

I took my seat on the ground close beside him and lifted him over, reclining on my chest, his face close to mine to steady his head, his right elbow in the hollow of my right hand to support and steady his arm, and a pencil slipped into his hand; Jim Rowell had provided the sheet of paper, held on the smooth lid of the hospital knapsack improvised as a desk. He wrote rapidly – all of this transpired in haste – murmuring to himself the words, audible to me for I looked another way.

He began with place and date – "On the battlefield, July 3rd, 1863." He wrote a little more than half a page into which he poured with vehemence his whole soul of tenderest love never faltering for a word; and a message toward the last, with a name that he wrote silently, conscious of the presence of strangers; but the message was too personal and sacred to him for me to trespass. For it was holy ground.

The last line he softly repeated aloud: "I dip this letter in my dying blood." With that he turned down the blanket and seizing the letter pressed the back of it upon his oozing, bloody wound, and handed it to me; giving his mother's address and begging to be sure she got that letter.

From Virginia I saw that she got the letter, its content unrevealed except to herself.

I arose from the ground and had him supported, when he turned to me with a reminder of my promise and of his hopeless pain. I handed him the cup and he feebly waved it saying: "Come around, boys, and let us have a toast. I do not invite you to drink with me, but I drink the toast to you, and to the Southern Confederacy, and to victory!" And he grabbed it to the last drop, returning the cup, saying, "I thank you."

We laid him back on some improvised soft head-rest, and I rushed off to work among the wounded.

In about an hour, passing hastily, I lifted the cover from his face, to find him sleeping painlessly.

Three hours later, as the tide of battle turned and the Southern Confederacy had touched its highest watermark and ebb-tide began, I passed again and laid aside the cover from his face, to find that the spirit of our reincarnated Sir Galahad had taken its flight in triumphal ascension to Him who instituted and consecrated the Holy Grail. Oh, the excruciating pathos and very agony of the glory! …

Upon the receding wave of the great charge, came a heavy drift of shattered humanity.

Gettysburg Penn.
July 3rd.

My dear Mother
This is the last you may ever hear from me. I have time to tell you that I died like a man. Bear my loss best you can. Remember that I am true to my country and my greatest regret at dying is that she is not free and that you and my sisters are robbed of my worth whatever that may be. I hope this will reach you and you must not regret that my body can not be obtained. It is a mere matter of form anyhow.
This is for my sisters too as I can not write more. Send my dying release to Miss Mary … you know who.

J. S. Gage
Co. A, 11th Miss

One of Gage's comrades later wrote: "Thus passed away one of the immortals, one of the finest specimens of those who wore the Gray. As a student and a follower of the 'Lost Cause' he was the admiration of his comrades."[123]

Notes

[1] William Allan, "Memoranda of Conversations with Lee," in *Lee: The Soldier,* ed. Gary Gallagher, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 14.

[2] United States War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,* 70 vols. in 128 parts (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901; reprint, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Historical Times, Inc., 1985), Series 1, 27(2): 320. (Hereafter cited as *OR.)*

[3] Edward Porter Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander,* ed. Gary Gallagher (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 244; Edward Porter Alexander, "The Great Charge and Artillery Fighting at Gettysburg," in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War,* ed. Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel (New York: The Century Co., 1888), 3:360; Campbell Brown, *Campbell Brown's Civil War*, ed. Terry L. Jones (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 222.

[4] James Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," in Gallagher, *Lee: The Soldier*, 206-7. This article is the earliest of Longstreet's post-war writings on Gettysburg, so logic says that this article would be the most accurate. Many Gettysburg scholars over the years have associated this quote with the event eventually known as Pickett's Charge. However, there is no way that Longstreet could have offered a flanking plan to Lee and then devised an immediate plan for Pickett, Pettigrew, and Trimble to assault Cemetery Ridge. The only way this quote makes sense would be if Longstreet was referring to the initial attack plan with the entire 1st Corps. Of course, after so many years, Longstreet's memory could have faded.

[5] James Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox: Memoirs of the Civil War in America* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1908), 385.

[6] James Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," 206-7.

[7] James Longstreet, "Lee's Right Wing at Gettysburg," in Johnson and Buel, 3:343.

[8] William G. Piston, "Cross Purposes: Longstreet, Lee, and Confederate Attack Plans for July 3 at Gettysburg," *Third Day at Gettysburg & Beyond,* ed. Gary W. Gallagher (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 45-6.

[9] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):320.

[10] A. L. Long, *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1886), 288.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Walter H. Taylor, "Second Paper by Colonel Walter H. Taylor, of General Lee's Staff," in *Southern Historical Society Papers* 4 (July, 1877):132-33; Long, *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee,* 294.

[13] Louis G. Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," in *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861 – '65,* ed. Walter Clark (Goldsboro, N. C.: Nash Brothers, Book and Job Printers,1901), 5:124.

[14] Walter Taylor, *Four Years with General Lee* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1878), 109.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," 209.

[17] W. Gart Johnson, "Reminiscences of Lee and of Gettysburg," *Confederate Veteran* ed. S. A. Cunningham (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1988), 1:246.

[18] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):320.

[19] Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy*, 280.

[20] Lafayette McLaws, "Address of General McLaws before the Georgia Historical Society," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 7 (February, 1879):79.

[21] Ibid., 83.

[22] Evander Law, "The Struggle for Round Top," in Johnson and Buel, 3:326.

[23] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):447.

[24] Edward Porter Alexander, *Military Memoirs of a Confederate* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 418; Edward Porter Alexander, "The Great Charge and Artillery Fighting at Gettysburg," 362; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):385.

[25] Ibid., 511; Harry W. Pfanz, *Gettysburg – Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 310-27.

[26] Ibid., 280-81. Distance measurements are derived from the Bachelder maps.

[27] John W. Busey and David W. Martin, *Regimental Strengths and Losses at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, N. J.: Longstreet House, 1986), 283-4, 290-1, 293-4.

[28] Walter Harrison, *Pickett's Men: A Fragment of War History* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Publisher, 1870), 91-2. The haphazard or "spur of the moment" placement of Armistead's men is another clear sign of the lack of clear planning in the assault preparation.

[29] Ibid., 97; *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):359; Joseph C. Mayo, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 34 (1906):331 – 32; Robert A. Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," *Confederate Veteran,* 38:266.

[30] David L. and Aubrey J. Ladd, eds., *The Bachelder Papers: Gettysburg in Their Own Words* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1994), 1:518.

[31] Isaac T. Miller, *Confederate Veteran,* 3:281.

[32] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):359; Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," 124.

[33] *Supplement to the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,* 100 volumes (Wilmington, N.C.: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1995), Part I, 5(5):312. Major Berkley also gives an almost verbatim account in an unpublished memoir.

[34] Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," 264.

[35] *Supplement to the Official Records,* Part 1, 5(5):331.

[36] James L. Kemper to Edward P. Alexander, September 20, 1869, transcription at Gettysburg National Military Park; *OR,* Series 1, 27(1):438. The map drawn by Union brigade commander Norman J. Hall and published in the *Official Records* clearly illustrates Kemper's move by the left flank.

[37] Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," 264.

[38] Birkett Fry, "Pettigrew's Charge at Gettysburg," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 7 (February, 1879):93; Eppa Hunton, *The Autobiography of Eppa Hunton,* ed. Eppa Hunton, Jr. (Richmond: William Berg Press, Inc., 1933), 44-5.

[39] Harrison, *Pickett's Men,* 95-6.

[40] Kathleen R. Georg and John W. Busey, *Nothing but Glory: Pickett's Division at Gettysburg* (Hightstown, N.J.: Longstreet House, 1987), 117.

[41] Thomas R. Friend to Charles Pickett, Dec. 10, 1894, transcription at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[42] Fry, "Pettigrew's Charge at Gettysburg;" Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg;" Mayo, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg;" W. Stuart Symington to James Longstreet, Oct. 26, 1892, transcription at Gettysburg National Military Park; W. Stuart Symington to Charles Pickett, Oct. 17, 1892, transcription at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[43] Alexander, *Military Memoirs of a Confederate,* 418.

[44] Kathleen R. Georg, *A Common Pride and Fame: The Attack and Repulse of Pickett's Division* (n.p., 1980), 427. Ironically, the quote comes from the appendix entitled "The Objective Point of the Assault: The Clump of Trees or Ziegler's Grove?" The author contends that Ziegler's Grove was the point of attack.

[45] Although no written proof exists, some Gettysburg Rangers feel that a fence running perpendicular and straight toward the Union line served as an alignment guide for Fry's brigade.

[46] Alexander, *Military Memoirs of a Confederate,* 418-19.

[47] *OR*, Series 1, 27(1):480.

[48] Long, *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee,* 288; Taylor, *Four Years with General Lee*, 103.

[49] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):650.

[50] Ibid., 666.

[51] T. M. R. Talcott, "The Third Day at Gettysburg," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 41 (September, 1916):44. Although there is no evidence, perhaps a variation of the plan called for Lane and Scales to advance from their original position *en echelon* behind Brockenbrough.

[52] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):666.

[53] George C. Underwood, "Twenty-Sixth Regiment," in *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861 – '65,* ed. Walter Clark (Goldsboro, N. C.: Nash Brothers, Book and Job Printers,1901), 2:365.

[54] Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," 5:124 - 25.

[55] William S. Christian to John W. Daniel, October 24, 1903, transcription at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[56] Ibid. Many histories have wrongly referred to Mayo's brigade instead of Brockenbrough. According to the primary accounts, Brockenbrough at least physically entered the charge.

[57] Gerard A. Patterson, "In a Most Disgraceful Manner," *Civil War Times Illustrated* (March/April 1990): 47. Later in the war, Heth sought to disband the battalion.

[58] Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," 5:124-25.

[59] Ibid. The land factor comes from the author's personal observations.

[60] Ibid., 125-6.

[61] Ibid., 126.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Ibid., 128. On his map, Gettysburg Historian John Bachelder places Trimble's two brigades well in the rear of Seminary Ridge on the present-day Brown Ranch.

[64] Patterson, "In a Most Disgraceful Manner," 48.

[65] "Letter from General Trimble," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 9 (January, 1881):33.

[66] W. H. Swallow, "The Third Day at Gettysburg," *Southern Bivouac* (February 1886): 567.

[67] Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," 5:128.

[68] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):659; S. A. Ashe, "The Pettigrew-Pickett Charge: July 3, 1863," in *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861 – '65,* ed. Walter Clark (Goldsboro, N. C.: Nash Brothers, Book and Job Printers,1901), 5:146 - 7.

[69] Young, "Pettigrew's Brigade at Gettysburg," 5:128; Underwood, "Twenty-Sixth Regiment," 2:366.

[70] John J. Garnett, *Gettysburg: A Complete Historical Narrative of the Battle of Gettysburg, and the Campaign Preceding It* (New York: J. M. Hill Publisher, 1888), 39. When showing this quote to several colleagues, they insist the cupola is at Gettysburg College. This cannot be correct, for the following reasons: 1) Lee could see the Federal center clearer from the Seminary; 2) The Seminary was nearer his headquarters; 3) The location of John Garnett's battery was near the Seminary.

[71] A. H. Moore, "Heth's Division at Gettysburg," *Southern Bivouac* (May 1885): 389.

[72] Fry, "Pettigrew's Charge at Gettysburg," 92.

[73] Mayo, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," 34:328-29.

[74] Swallow, "The Third Day at Gettysburg," 565.

[75] Charles S. Venable to Joseph Davis, August 12, 1889, copy at Gettysburg National Military Park. The author has used this letter to determine the order of events taking place after the attack. Venable was physically with Lee for much of this time period and recorded the sequence.

[76] "Lee Statue Site: Properly Located On Confederate Avenue, Gettysburg," Scotland, Franklin County Pennsylvania, n. d., copy located at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[77] Charles S. Venable to Joseph Davis, August 12, 1889, copy at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[78] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):625.

[79] Charles S. Venable to Joseph Davis, August 12, 1889, copy at Gettysburg National Military Park; Charles T. Loehr, "The 'Old First' Virginia at Gettysburg," *Southern Historical Society Papers* 32 (1904):37.

[80] Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," 266; Loehr, "The 'Old First' Virginia at Gettysburg," 37. The author has mixed and matched several accounts for the narrative. Bright's account is probably the most famous. According to Bright, Lee said "Come, General Pickett, this has been my fight, and upon my shoulders rests the blame. The men and officers have written the name of Virginia as high to-day as it has ever been written before." Although more dramatic, the author makes the judgment that Bright's account is a bit embellished in "Virginia lore." Loehr's account more readily fits with Lee's other statements.

[81] Bright, "Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg," 266; Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy,* 266. According to Bright, Kemper raised up on his elbow "with much pain" and replied "Yes, General Lee; do full justice to this division for its work today." Out of the two accounts, surely Kemper wanted to draw attention to his brigade and not the entire division of *Virginians.*

[82] Longstreet, "Lee's Right Wing at Gettysburg," 3:347; Arthur James Lyon Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1954), 213.

[83] Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary,* 213.

[84] Moore, "Heth's Division at Gettysburg," 392-393; Charles S. Venable to Joseph Davis, August 12, 1889, copy at Gettysburg National Military Park.

[85] Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy,* 266.

[86] Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary,* 214.

[87] Ibid., 215.

[88] Frederick M. Colston, "Gettysburg As I Saw It," *Confederate Veteran,* ed. Walter Clark (Goldsboro, N. C.: Nash Brothers, Book and Job Printers, 1901), 5:352 – 3.

[89] Ibid., 215; James Barbour Johnson, "A Limited Review of What One Man Saw of the Battle of Gettysburg," copy at Gettysburg National Military Park. Johnson served with Perry's Florida Brigade during the battle. He witnessed the conversation because he was sent to succor reinforcements for his beleaguered command after the repulse.

As most know, Wilcox's attack came at the end of the whole assault. Therefore, this conversation had to occur after Lee had been present for several minutes. Alexander noted Wilcox's brigade advancing to the attack at the time of Lee's arrival.

It is interesting to note how two different people perceive the same conversation. Fremantle uses the word "cheerfully" to describe Lee's demeanor. On the other hand, Johnson wrote that Lee exhibited a "sad face." The author does not doubt the veracity of Fremantle's diary. However, the more one reads Fremantle, the more colorful the adjectives seem. How could anyone possess "cheerfulness" after an attack like that?

[90] Alexander, *Fighting for the Confederacy,* 265.

[91] Loehr, "The 'Old First' Virginia at Gettysburg," 37.

[92] Jacob Hoke, *The Great Invasion of 1863* (Dayton, Ohio: W. J. Shuey Publisher, 1887), 425-7.

[93] Harrison, *Pickett's Men,* 101-2.

[94] *OR,* Series 1, 27(3):986-7.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Thomas R. Friend, "Pickett's Position," *The (Richmond) Times Dispatch,* November 24, 1903.

[97] *OR,* Series 1, 27(3):1075.

[98] John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1917), 380-2.

[99] Gary Gallagher, foreword to *James Longstreet: Lee's War Horse,* by H. J. Eckenrode and Bryan Conrad (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), x-xi.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Allan, "Memoranda of Conversations with Lee," 14.

[102] Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," 309.

[103] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):360.

[104] Alexander, *Military Memoirs,* 424.

[105] Alexander, "The Great Charge and Artillery Fighting at Gettysburg," 362; *Supplement to the Official Records,* Part 1, 5(5):358; Alexander, *Military Memoirs,* 418; Lewis, Hutton, Gayle, Lippett, James, Johnston, and Oates Files, John W. Daniels Papers, Gettysburg National Military Park. Confederate recollections in the Daniels Papers show the times for Pickett's arrival on the field. Clearly Harrison was wrong when stating that the division deployed at 12 P.M. *Thanks to Col. Bill Hewitt for sharing his Pickett research.*

[106] Longstreet, "Lee's Right Wing at Gettysburg," 345.

[107] *Supplement to the Official Records,* Part 1, 5(5):359-60.

[108] Alexander, *Fighting For the Confederacy*, 254-5.

[109] Fremantle, *The Fremantle Diary*, 211.

[110] Longstreet, *From Manassas to Appomattox,* 391.

[111] Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," 308; Alexander, *Fighting For the Confederacy,* 259.

[112] "Longstreet Didn't Order the Charge," *Gettysburg Compiler,* September 1902. As a source, several problems occur in this article. The first is that the article comes from a New Orleans paper. Second, the article is from a third-party. Third, Pickett died in 1875. Therefore, Wilson may have misconstrued facts over time. Nevertheless, one has to pose the question, how could anyone make this up?

[113] Longstreet, *Manassas to Appomattox,* 388.

[114] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):308, 320.

[115] Talcott, "The Third Day at Gettysburg," 41:40.

[116] Alexander, *Fighting For the Confederacy,* 245-6.

[117] Ibid., 249.

[118] Ibid., 258.

[119] Ibid., 262; Longstreet, "Lee's Right Wing at Gettysburg," 345.

[120] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):321.

[121] Longstreet, "Lee in Pennsylvania," 5:73.

[122] *OR*, Series 1, 27(2):309.

[123] Maud Morrow Brown, *The University Greys: Company A Eleventh Mississippi Regiment Army of Northern Virginia* (Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massie, Inc., 1940), 38-41. Two principal accounts exist of the story of Jeremiah Gage on July 3. The first is in Legrand James Wilson, *The Confederate Soldier* (Memphis State University Press, 1973); the second, and the one used for this story, is from Maud Morrow Brown, *The University Grays* (Richmond: Garrett and Massie Incorporated, 1940). Both stories are almost identical, which lends the story even more credibility. The major discrepancy, besides the verbiage, is that Wilson attributes the conversation to a Dr. Shields, while Brown uses a primary account of Dr. Holt – who claims to be the doctor.